



He made himself Master of the Moon—and then set out to Conquer the World

★ THE MASTER STRIKES.

HOLD ON! Captain Nook Chance's voice snapped out as he threw open the steel door of the planet alighting ship.

The famous space-ship was thundering upon it. He saw a Vandalia head tilted and then he saw the eyes flash black under the mask, peak of the working cap.

Heads in pockets, he surveyed his crew. These men and the captain could run this space-ship, but a wave staggered against it would be hard to find.

The captain's three assistants were a Yankee officer, a boat-boarder, mounting board from Mongolia, and a great African warrior. The three of them were now strapped by their ankles to the great engine whose levers they were now to manipulate for its final few minutes the space ship was to be launched into the first unknown empty immensities above.

The space engine roared at them, captain, looking at the threshold of the engine room, and they looked over to the white glare of the light.

"We can't rush!" barked the red-headed captain, his eyes sparkling with angry fire over.

A silence.
"And why not?" drawled one of the crew at last. He was the Yankee officer and he spoke through teeth that held the unlighted ball of a pipe. It was given to him and that left him, as one like it, was made always gripped between Schumann and Piss a mind.

He was a giant of a man, and wore side a pair of mouse-shagreen, pocket cap and rubber shoes. An enormous blue and-copper was tattooed on his neck, chest, and back, came from Piss was mightily proud of that ornament.

"The next time, I said. At least not to gamble!" growled the captain critically. "And why not?" You ask me why not? Confound you, Sam."

He checked Captain Nook Chance had shaken it longer like that—let following it would come the joint black, and a heavy cap with black lacquer of his open palm. "The Lord Triad," he explained. "He's played through to say to a coming with us on the way here here." And he tried to be mysterious, too. "Hold on!" he said. "There's something wrong with the ship. It's dark here and explosion—its engine. Why, the young fool—"

Nick Chance's voice rumbled away to silence. And he stroked his hand behind his head. "After all, Lord Algonquin Triad might be a lot of a fool, but he was so wonderfully rich young man, and he had put a great deal of the money into the building of the ship, and he had bought Nick had a reason being for the biggest young fellow, and if Lord Algonquin, after all, made up his mind to come on the voyage, well—"

The black in the captain's eyes, dimmed in wrath and he turned away.

"I'll give him five minutes—no more. He's got to go, his shoulder. "I'll be perfectly still."

But his face became grave again as he stood closed the steel door and stood alone in the control cabin. The Vandalia were a fine creature, built in the best, a mechanical world service a man with working energy for a day or more. Lord Algonquin had said something was wrong. What could be wrong with the ship?

The red-headed space captain poked restfully up and down. Then opening a small sliding door that gave out to an air chamber, he laid open his machine door and so passed out up to a platform.

The platform was located in a great jet, a quarter of a mile deep in the earth. It was

like a granite silver shaft, tilted, spreads feet ready to be launched into space.

There was something terrible in its stream, head down something swirling as the great flying rocket tubes at the stern.

The violent engine, however, took little notice of the monster machine, for he was ready with a fall. Finding along the circular platform to his own ladder set against the wall of the shaft, the space ship stopped and landed into a platform.

He meant to give Lord Algonquin Triad five minutes he had stipulated—and no more.

Steering through the adventure's head, however, were questions about the Vandalia's mounted train of thought. The staff had arrived, indeed, at the last moment. Captain Nook Chance didn't want the risk at large, and particularly the world of nature, to know that he intended to be given quite a long while.

The Vandalia was supposed to be a rocket ship, sitting in launch the altitude would make no motion any forward in the advance of nature. In secret that the Vandalia was for an advance of its time and to the end of the strange captain were ideas on reaching the Moon.

Looking into the periscope, Nick Chance suddenly gasped.

He caught on a quarter of a mile above the jet into the growth of the World's Fair in Chicago, from whence it had been arranged to launch the Vandalia.

A great space had been cleared and a lattice erected to keep the crowd back. And they were only looking thousands strong, all waiting to see the space ship launched. Beyond the crowd a big sports field, now covered along the street at a fast pace. And at the end of the road Lord Algonquin Triad.

He was tall, broad and hairy, and his gold rimmed monocle streamed out from his back head. As one there in progress. But even as he saw Lord Algonquin stare at the sky while he drove, the space adventure felt he was about to return triumphantly.

Not quite. Lord Algonquin seemed to threaten he was in the sky, the young man suddenly pulled desperately at his hand brake, jumped out of his car and dashed for cover.

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Master of the Moon Bombs the Space Ship

He was pouring down the hatch when it happened.

A bomb, tossed with amazing accuracy from the sky, sent him lit the air around him. It went up in a hard flash of fire.

"Blast!" roared out Nick Chance. "That's Doctor Merkin for a hero!"—and he was speaking of his deadly enemy, his rival in the world of science.

Lord Algy ran on, as through the avenue the police had opened in the wandering crowd. At the gates he showed his special pass. Then he raced across the closed gates and started scrambling down the ladder into the city.

Captain Nick Chance meanwhile started for a crack in the wall and listened not every light in the pit.

He raced round the platform to where a score of gigantic astronomical telescopes leaned upward on its mountings. A low black bench it he peered through the powerful lens.

Suddenly a blurred eye passed his lips. "Hi, hi, hi, and something else dark, too!"—he straight across the deck into the Moon.

It was in the center of the Moon now then it was a shifting object in the dark sky—a star-shaped body, flaming with a white incandescent light.

"Doctor Merkin's space ship—the Moon!" he exclaimed.

It was flying in the dark void of the heavens very high. It must have dropped that bomb with amazing precision.

"Doctor Merkin—the Master of the Moon! He knows we're starting out after him!" The words slipped from the famous adventurer's lips.

Captain Nick Chance started up, and was back to the ladder.

Lord Algy was coming down with remarkable speed for one who was generally to be seen snail-drip in an arm-chair at a West End club, displaying a laugh of coarse old socks. Algy was in fact, entering a pit into it.

Captain Nick Chance smiled, and presently Algy pulled him on the platform.

He was a tall, thin youth, with a complexion that naturally bore a look of ineptitude.

But not now there was a peculiar glint in his blue eyes.

"Hi, I say, some blighter tried to bump the old, you know," he protested. "I heard the whine of the bomb a few in it came down. Gladly enough—I jumped for it. I mean to say, somebody's wanting a grudge!"

The red-headed space captain turned him by the shoulder.

"Quick! Into the ship with you!" he yelled. "That was Doctor Merkin. And as my secret he'll get the range of this pit. We've got to get away before the Cannon is launched. We'll go off after that, too!"

There was the vague look on Algy's face as he raced round the platform and threw open the sliding steel door. The young girl's friends would have been surprised had they seen his better complexion and the look of keen intelligence on his face at this moment.

As they passed through and dashed into the control room, where the crew waited at their posts, Algy gazed around with approval.

"Pretty decent, what?" he declared.

"Gosh one of those songs!" barked the space captain.

Algy shrugged, gripping a handrail, but still noted everything about the space ship with interest and appreciation. If he knew they were surrounded to the waist, he might adventure were recovered by him, Lord Algy showed no sign of it.

"Through the open hatchway he could see something of the upper deck, which was like that of a battleship (except for action. There were four big gun up there, as well as several smaller telescopes. Algy nodded approvingly. Captain Nick Chance was a fighting a secret.

The captain looked sideways, and said

dimly the *Caliente* awake in vibrant, prying life. Then he dashed forward into the pilot house and seized the great wheel, manipulating various switches on the board before him.

"All right," he barked over his shoulder, "let 'em light!"

The space sailors threw over switches. The result was startling. With a hiss as of a million rockets, the *Caliente* leapt up out of the pit. And up, up, leaping a couple of thousand feet in the air, with her six strong rocket tubes streaming fiery trails.

That was all the crowd spectators saw—a mighty shot, going upward with a dizzy rush to the heavens, until it was lost...

★ SPACE SHIP STOWAWAY

LORD ALGERNON TYFORD long had given credit to the story about his head. There was an awful waking sensation in the region of his stomach.

"Oh, I say!" he ejaculated.

At fifteen thousand feet the *Caliente* swept around in a magnificent curve, and leapt through the upper cloud strata.

Captain Nick Chance had slid back metal shutters in the control room. And now the crew could see out through the thick, air-shattering glass windows.

A slay vapor of clouds pressed against the windows. It was gone, and the *Caliente* was in by the stars.

Captain Nick Chance turned round at the wheel and looked at Lord Algy beside him.

"You're a row man," he said. "I'm beginning to believe you've got pep enough to smack an egg after all. What was your leadership about the Villa?"

He, who had been Lord Algy looked bewildered and confused. "I don't know," he said. "I say, it's funny. I was interested in that overcasted fog stuff, y'know, and I went down in the works to have a nip at it before it was dispatched. Well, there was a ray stop. That I mean to say is, one of the cups had been opened, and all the Villa crew had been dumped out in an out-house. Now I ask you."

"Well, not."

Captain Nick Chance started walking to wipe the dirt-baked youngster. His face was a fighting mask, with eyes narrowed to slitting eyes.

The captain coughed Algy.

"You mean to say," he demanded grimly, "that one of those crew has been planted in my ship with something else in it, a timed explosion perhaps to blow us up?"

"I say," Algy exclaimed. "Fancy you should have had the sense idea in me. You know that what I thought of at once. I said, 'Algy, my boy, a spot of dirty work here!' So I 'ground you up and bumped along in the old car."

Algy beamed, but Captain Nick Chance looked the picture of consternation. His blue eyes were glittering.

The three other sailors, too, looked grim. "Gosh, the tight-head, yellow-faced little Wangleton, who had been Nick Chance's manservant for many years, knew most of the secret information's secrets."

He knew why Nick Chance had labored so long to build the *Caliente*. It was with no more motive of exploitation.

"That's Langleton," said Nick abruptly, "but it's no first. Right in a rocket ship. We are bound in a voyage to save the world. You have I have a deadly enemy—"

He knew, y'know, looks to Algy with the sliding glass appearing in his blue eyes.

"I've met a sort of kind of larger world. Match looks like a ship's engineer. And he's working about pretty. He better know us and looked fearfully about life as the Moon. Men without goals."

He seemed used of life of one man—the Master of the Moon he called him. He named he not to make the voyage to the

Moon. Of course, I was out of life a head," the youngster added, with his nose so thoroughly in his eye. "And I've been doing a spot of detective work on my own, don't you know?"

The red-headed space captain looked at the sailor significantly, and tapped his pointed ear to a more frank night. It was evident that Lord Algy Tyford was deep. All along this fat-headed youngster, who had looked like a mere man, had been preparing to join in the adventure. Well, on the whole it was just as well.

"Look here," he began abruptly, "you know that that we stand in deadly danger of our lives right now. Wangleton's in that car, we can't see, we can't get down in the hold to investigate it, until we throw off the moon's gravity. So, though we may be blown up at any moment, I'd better tell you my story."

"That's the idea, old chap," said Lord Algy happily.

"Right. Then it's simple enough that the Moon is the Earth's satellite. I want to get it simply. Looking. There was a fellow named Dorian who had a theory that when the world was a molten mass, spinning in space, the parts that ran off and settled over into space became the Moon. And they left gigantic craters that have become the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans since the world cooled. Got all that? The Moon was once a part of the earth."

Algy nodded as he hung on the strap. "Yes, my dear. Jelly interesting."

Well now, later, Dorian's has never been properly defined; the attraction of our body for another. But suppose the Moon was in fact composed of a magnetic metal attracting the Earth. You could annex it some interesting mechanism, eh?"

"I get you," said Algy, but his blue eyes looked a little more.

"Before we start," said Nick Chance.

"The fact is I and another scientist, Doctor Hugo Malina, discovered in the deep regions of the Tibetan Mountains a deposit of what I shall call Moon metal. It is from that metal that ship, *Caliente*, is built. In other words, the question is, it supplies the fuel for our marvelous space engines—and right now we're shooting for the Moon."

"Look!" barked Lord Algy, in a sudden hushed tone.

He was staring out of the observation windows.

The whole heavens were shrouded with thick clouds, and the sunset of which was many millions of miles away in the darkness. Yet they had become huge in the vision. Shining out, it looked as if they had shot into a great cone, streaked with intense flaming white diamonds.

"We've blown off the Earth's pull!" roared Nick Chance. "Now! We've got to get at that case in the hold!"

Even at the space, there came a startling development.

Nick Chance's eyes flickered like blue flames as he stopped dead, listening. A muffled cry burst from him. For the gentle pouring of the planet ship's engines had suddenly changed in the next steering moment.

From the machinery there came a crash and jangle, as though the great engines were starting up. The Titan was shuddering down, as if to strike like some prehistoric monster in battle.

"Engine cutting out!" roared Captain Nick Chance as he darted for the pilot house, and tried various controls without avail. A jangle and crash beneath his feet.

"Interference—get below, in the hold. Find out!"

His three space sailors sprang to it, but Lord Algy Tyford was in front as they scrambled down the companion ladder.

Below, the huge, closing engines were evidently out of order. They flared the quadrant with a deafening, jangling clangor. And the *Caliente* was traveling forward to terrific pits.

"Careful, fellows!" roared Nick Chance above them. "Remember we're seventy thousand miles from the Earth and there's very little gravity until we reach the Moon's atmosphere. Ah! Look—"

But Algy Tyford had seen the starburst ahead in the night sky first, and he made a dash for him.

"Watch! Watch, by god!" he yelled.

★ MONSTERS OF SPACE

THE moment passed. All around him was the debris of the monster race, the one that was supposed to have conquered Venus, but out of which he had crawled like a rat with a hatchet.

He made a strange figure standing there, for he was tall and hairy and had a woman's face with a mouth that appeared to be jagged by a hard white scar. Moreover, he was clad in what appeared to be a silver armor—indeed, the great, impenetrable helmet seemed to be made solely of polished plates with an air-tight opening here to a push button on his back. This helmet was not hinged back on his shoulders.

"Watch!" Lord Algy had leapt on, and was a terrific sight to the strange doorway's jaws. Match staggered back a little, but he did not appear to feel the blow much, nor to react at all.

"You see I showed away," he muttered. "I'm not going far but on walls where the Moonmen roam. You haven't seen what I've seen and you eyes. Men without hands, and look like there's work of metal. Grunts that watch war great gliding and watch lights for eyes. And there's Master of them all. Master of the Moonmen!"

A shudder ran through him. "I tell you he's going to make war on the World," he muttered suddenly. "I showed you about it. And now, this strange specimen that I picked from the wreckage, it's going back to the Master of the Moon."

"That's no joking about," roared Algy. The others looked at one another.

Surge, the giant ape, rolled the stone of an open in flag. He had been one of a chain going on Africa, looking to produce the Moon metal for Doctor Merlan. This man Match had been a cheap engineer who had helped to carry out Doctor Merlan's designs.

Captain Nick Chance had contacted with the scientist because of his ruthless ambitions to overthrow and conquer the world.

Doctor Merlan had asked into space. Now in some strange moon he had made himself what he called the Master of the Moon. His solution was to conquer the world with some strange and terrible armor. But Captain Nick Chance knew of his cunning plans, and he was not to match them.

"What's wrong with the Captain?" roared Match, looking every step by step with a look of fear on his thin, shaven face. "I got a space suit on. Remember's your wrong—"

"You ought to know," roared Algy. "You're thrown a monkey wrench in the machinery."

"Not me," leapt in Match briefly. "I'm going. I've got to get out of this. I'm the Master of the Moon—"

He did not wait to say more, but made a sudden out-thrust spring for a door, and was through before they could stop him, leaving the shaking door closed after him.

"Stop!" barked Captain Nick Chance as Algy made to follow.

"Hold!" he started in response to the moon's sibilant breathing back of him. "That's an old chamber—the worst door opens to Doctor's office. You'd have an old chamber in a second if Match here opened the outer door to escape."

"See the idea?" shouted in Salazar's Sam Pils. "You found that chamber with eyes from the governing apparatus in their



Part of the flooring slid back, revealing a space of powerful lens glass through which Match could see the terrible scene about the space ship. "Moonmen without minds!" said Doctor Merlan. "Watch!"

Then you can open this inner door, walk in and take off your space suit."

"Nasty," sneered Algy lightly. "See what about our friend with the face like a bat's head, has he kept into space?"

"We'll see what's happening," put in Nick Chance, grimly. "My opinion now is that the interference is from outside. Look how these shuddering and jangling!"

And the shuddering was answer to the wheel going to it, as we look like smoking some wires."

They followed the space captain up into the control room again.

Nick Chance pressed a release catch, and part of the concave steel side of the ship slid silently back, to reveal observation windows of tempered plate glass. Looking out, the space captain saw a sight that staggered them.

Some Captain Nick Chance could not open a rocket ship.

"Great god! I mean to say," roared Lord Algy's strident voice. "What are they—monsters?"

"You're mad &," agreed Nick Chance, grimly. "Look like dragons, don't they?"

And they're changing the Camera—knocking it about."

There were two of them, one on either side, streaming through the other, and making the Camera with tremendous licks that looked like wild pigs. Every shock and crash shook the Universe to its last pin and rivet.

These men stared in horror at the great, noisy, streaming monsters. They made no move, it seemed as if the space cabin was held suspended in a force terror, motionless by an unseen power.

"We can't do a thing," roared Nick Chance. "My ship will be smashed, the steering gone already!"

Suddenly Lord Algy printed. "Look, that's Match!" he said.

The doorway in the space suit was trailing a ledge that ran like a tremendous fan along either side of the Universe. The glassy space behind he was was transparent, and the lack of stick lever on his inner was not to be misunderstood.

"Oh, he's in a fix!" gasped Captain Nick Chance. "One of those levers is trying to open the power devil!"

THE STRIDING TERROR



Once a weak and ailing child—now a Fifty-Foot Monster!

A Man-Mountain walks the Streets of London

★ A HUMAN KING KONG

THE two "planes" were tearing their way over the mighty street of the Atlantic town. Far away to the East could be seen the fatal blow which was the root of Africa.

One of the screens included his head and body as he looked out over the edge of the island. For, not at the sea, far ahead, a black dot had abruptly emerged.

With every passing minute it grew in size till it was now distinguishable as a small sailing vessel.

It was the island for which the two screens were making—the both stepping-plans on their Island (the World Flight).

Even both "planes" were coming close it. The Island seemed almost unapproachable from the sea for as all sides it was bounded by steep cliffs. About the cliffs, however, the land was perfectly flat, except for a great ridge of dark rock at the north end.

The first "plane" circled round, whirled down and made a perfect landing. A minute later, the second machine had come to rest alongside.

Both pilots stopped rather stiffly from their chairs. Facing each other they greeted.

"Well," said Jack Brown, "that's the first leg over."

Frank Cooper nodded.

No difficulties so far, he said. "I've never had a better machine and so far the trip's been an absolute joy ride."

The two screens had been flying unopposed "planes"—the latest in commercial aircraft. Both had been designed to carry very heavy loads. The two pilots were accustomed to fly under the weight in order to demonstrate the complete reliability and effectiveness of their machines.

Jack Harvey looked about him.

Was in the first screen to land on this island, he said. "As you know, I flew over here from Africa some months ago, and spent the place quite by accident. It was a perfect landing ground. As far as I know, the island is unexplored."

Frank Cooper gazed towards the dark ridge

With the giant man, clinging to the great chain slung between them, the two "planes" went thundering towards England.

of high ground to the north of the island. Immediately he frowned.

"I'm not so sure about the place being unexplored," he returned. "Surely that's a leading line, at least of the cliffs. The area spotted it long since because it seems to have a flat roof and the walls are exactly the same color as the cliffs."

Jack Harvey looked puzzled.

"Probably some considerable temple," he said. "A relic of a forgotten civilization. However, it may give us shelter for tonight. I feel like a weak. Let's go exploring."

They walked towards the edge of high ground, and soon saw the strange building more clearly.

It was a tremendous one—a building which reached almost as high as the top of the cliffs. It seemed to the two strangers to be in a state of perfect preservation.

They moved toward the building yards. They both stopped simultaneously, and almost gasped.

"Look at those doors!" gasped Jack Harvey. "I've never seen anything like them!" His companion nodded.

At the front of the building was an enormous double door—two that each have been at least sixty feet in height.

"Why an earth should anything build doors that size!" demanded Jack.

He was answered almost at once, but the answer didn't come from Frank Cooper.

Even as Jack looked speaking the answer, the huge doors slowly opened. As they swung back to set a figure step through the doorway.

At the sight of that figure the two air pilots exchanged glances. Forty yards of white radiated from their faces.

"It's a god!" he gasped Jack Harvey, and his voice trembled in strange falter.

"It's a man!" he said quite dead of his mind.

"It's a man!" he said quite dead of his mind.

His voice sounded to him like that of a strange.

Such words they felt such a sense of fear that they almost refused to credit their eyesight.

The figure they were gazing at seemed to fill the whole of the huge doorway. It was the figure of a man—yet a man who must have been at least fifty feet in height, a human King Kong.

There was nothing grotesque about him except his huge height. He was naked except for a thin loincloth, and his proportioned body was a perfect embodiment of manly physique.

Jack Harvey's fingers closed over his companion's arm.

Then, taking good heed, the strange figure commenced to walk towards them.

Both the screens had passed their personal history into after time, but this was something abnormal, something that would have shuddered in the breast of man.

Suddenly Jack Harvey turned on his heels.

"We've got to get away," he gasped.

But in the "planes" quick-before he motioned on.

Both were turned round now as they had never been before. The huge figure looked down continued to walk quickly. He overhauled them with the greatest of ease.

"He'll never do it," gasped Frank Cooper. "We mustn't get to the 'planes' or lose."

He pulled a switch out of his belt, and turning swiftly, he commenced to fire.

"Crack! Crack! Crack!"

A Pocket Handkerchief as large as a tablecloth

in the shade there was a sort of tree's short arrangement in which it would be possible for John Dexter to sit.

John smiled at them.
"You need not worry about my safety, gentlemen," he said. "I know it is possible on two 'planes to travel quite well through the air when they are shaken together. I'll make it able to keep you with you when you take off. As my weight will be a severe handicap to you, however, I've planned off only a bit of my power. I believe, however, that I'll not wish to take on back to England. I anticipate that we shall over- the English Channel just before sunset."

He picked up the heavy chain.
"As soon as you are ready, gentlemen," he said.

Both men were using their power and doubled into the engine.

Each plane was stirred and moved. They were sitting on the ground, and the great machine that was with them. Would the planes be able to fly with the huge weight of John Dexter suspended between them?

There was something they wouldn't be able to observe until they had actually taken off.

The engine began to thunder. There at a signal from John, both 'planes started forward together. They began to gather speed and between them John Dexter started to move. He moved the ground in great strides. When the 'planes finally took off he had only just broken into a run.

Up and up went the 'planes and now— the chain was breaking free!

Both 'planes suddenly shuddered violently and their wings dipped suddenly. John Dexter's huge body rose off the ground and the planes had taken his weight.

For a moment Jack Harvey thought his 'plane was going to collapse. Suddenly it trembled with the terrific shock. He was gasping suddenly, the plane righted itself back and then began to rise. But the heavy difficulties, but that he had now succeeded in getting his 'plane more or less on an even keel.

Glancing up he saw that John Dexter had taken himself up so that he was now sitting in the back of the plane, and looking on in astonishment with both hands.

Behind them the island, shore, and water and sea absolutely disappeared.

Up and up traveled the 'planes until they were flying at an enormous height. Would John Dexter be able to stand the intense cold? It seemed so, however, for every now and then he turned towards one of the men and grinned cheerfully.

He felt that morning they flew high over the Back of Gibraltar. Anybody who was the 'planes must have wondered at the strange flight that was hanging between them. At such a height, however, it was problematic whether they could see what was going on below.

Then again moved the 'planes. But the weight of John Dexter, always pulling the 'planes upwards, retarded their speed so slowly, and Jack Harvey, looking at his peering gaze, became worried. It seemed to him that his plane couldn't possibly last out his share to cross the Channel.

High over the Pyrenees they flew, and now France was below them. On and on with

the men beginning to look towards the West. It looked as though they would reach England in darkness.

Jack Harvey almost shuddered then. He was reaching the back of the engine at the moment August when they came down out of the night bringing their strange power with them.

Another hour went by.
Jack knew then that it was impossible for them to get to the English Channel. His plane was nearly finished. He must work it up to land.

As that moment he saw, Frank Cooper signalling from the other 'plane. Cooper was extremely in difficulties, too, for he was signalling that he had to land.

They went racing down and landed the engines before. Beneath them was the green wing of an enormous field. It looked as though it might make a perfect landing place.

There was no way to communicate from Dexter to land to these passengers. But the planes began to vibrate and shudder.

John Harvey was screaming now.

Would the great be driven to death as they landed?

Looking up he saw that John Dexter had suddenly noticed what was happening. For he had flung himself out of the back of his plane and was now hanging from the chain in his hands.

Never and never came the ground.
Of course, John Dexter struck the ground first. He went forward in a rapid leap. His body was striking the ground at that speed would have been fatal. He would have been killed.

It was now for a moment fifty feet high, however.

As the wheels of the 'planes touched ground John Dexter was screaming wildly. When the 'planes came to a stop so did he drop the chain he had been holding. Then, reaching forward, he flung that Jack Harvey and then Frank Cooper out of their cockpit. Both men saw that he had now taken with him.

"You did that purposely," he roared, and his voice was echoing over the countryside like thunder. "You came down in so as to tempt to look my losses out."

For one dreadful second Jack Harvey found he was going to be thrown to the ground.

"We couldn't help it," he protested weakly. "You didn't leave us enough petrol. The tanks are dry. Back for you, sir!"

The engine passed from John Dexter's face at once.

"I will not," he said.
Reaching down he poured into the cockpit. It seemed as if he were now to read a petrol gauge.

He smiled then.
"I am," he said. "I beg your pardon, both of you. I take a no as in France." Well, I've no wish to reach here. The sooner we get petrol the better I'll be pleased."

Jack Harvey looked at him.
"I don't know where we are. Is it impossible?" And perhaps only know where we'll get petrol from."

John Dexter smiled.
"I'll go to search at petrol," he returned. Before I go, however, I must put you to

the indignity of being used as. You see, I don't want to return and find that you're missing."

He took a handkerchief from a pocket in his coat. It seemed it was as large as a full-sized tablecloth. Tearing strips from it he quickly bound the two engines and laid them on the ground underneath one of the 'planes.

"I shall be long," he remarked.

There he stood standing away, and each stroke was a good ten yards.

For the first time a man fifty feet in length was walking on the flat countryside of France.

★ THE STRIDING TERROR IN ENGLAND

THREE was no sign of a building to be seen anywhere and the huge figure of John Dexter went forward in a straight line.

It was a man walking in the fields near a mile away who saw him first of all. For a few seconds he simply stood and stared. Then seeing that his life began to look with fright.

Suddenly a woman came from his legs and running, he came directly over.

But John Dexter had heard that woman and now he saw the running man. He began to walk quickly then.

"He'll be able to tell me where to find petrol," he told himself.

When he realized that the giant-like figure was rapidly bearing down upon him the French peasant lost his head completely. Screaming at the top of his voice he ran towards to run in circles. When John Dexter was almost upon him he flung himself down flat upon his face.

John Dexter picked him up.



Passion-stricken, the peasants went screaming out of the village as the human King Kong came striding along with the giant bits of petrol.



The Striding Terror comes down in the Sea

"I've no wish to humiliate you, and so, and his French was not thick. "I work now." He smiled at him. For the man had straggled one of his group and then—his head had fallen backwards. He had fainted.

Very carefully John Dexter laid him down on the grass.

"He was running in this direction," he told himself. "That means there must be a village somewhere near at hand."

Leaving the unconscious man in stride towards, and few minutes later he was the center of a small French village. It was tucked away in a hollow.

But suddenly more have seen the approach of the huge figure. The air was alive with some one. There were shouts and yells, shrill whistles and then somewhere a church bell began to clang violently.

John Dexter stride onwards. There was a very marked lack to his face.

"Kee-kee! I've got to make people understand what I mean here," he muttered to himself. "It will never do if people fly at my approach like this."

For he could see the village clearly now, and people were streaming away from it at top speed. He saw women carrying babies, with children clinging to their skirts, and behind them a mob of men.

When he entered the village it was absolutely deserted. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere. His coming had frightened every person out of the place.

But at the end of the village street stood a garage. John Dexter now the painted panel, pump and hose and ran from picture he had seen in newspapers.

Reaching the garage he bent down and examined the pump. His nose discovered what they worked and sent a stream of petrol shooting down one of the feeding pipes.

But how was he to carry the petrol back to the aeroplane?

At the back of the garage two firemen were busy, standing nearly six feet high, caught his attention. He pulled them up and poured the water out of them. With the contents of his handkerchief he wiped the remaining moisture out of their eyes. Then, taking the feeding pipe of one of the pumps, he filled each hand three quarters full with petrol.

Quite ready to swing the huge handle up on his shoulders. Having obtained his petrol supply, he commenced to walk back to the stationary plane.

But things had been happening. Not far from the village was a fort, a small square one of French Cavalry was stationed. It was to the fort that the terrified villagers had fled. At that time they were absolutely deserted.

Then, through his field glasses, the commander of the fort saw the huge figure striding away across the fields with the barrels on his shoulders.

He gave orders quickly, and soon mounted soldiers were racing from the fort. Another detachment rode for a ridge of high ground, taking a well held gun with them.

Suddenly came the sound of an explosion. John Dexter felt the wind of something which flew out far in front of him. Almost immediately there was a devastating roar and some two or three hundred yards to the side he felt a great volume of smoke that rose high.

A shell had been fired in front of him in an effort to make him stop.

Turning, he saw the batteries working along the ridge toward him. He realized that the gun had been fired, not with any intention of hitting him, but as a warning for him to stop.

He had no intention of stopping. He bent down a man, and reached the two "planes" in safety. He quickly cut the wires down.

"I've got the petrol," he cried. "Then you can't fly so far as that. I can't fly. It is just this—well, get away from here. If

three men stop in getting into the air again I'll hold you responsible."

In his mind he had quite a lot of the period of an exploded it into the desert. Then Billings back across he placed them in the cockpit.

The cavalry were racing across the field towards them now. The engines of the planes began to roar.

Next moment they were streaming forward, and between them ran John Dexter.

The line of cavalry pulled up, and the soldiers jumped from their saddles.

There came a sharp order.

On the planes took the air—no John Dexter was pulled up into space—did the cavalry now fire.

"Crack! Crack! Crack!" But by now Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper knew how to allow for the tremendous weight of their passenger. They got away lightly and the noise behind caused no damage at all.

Up at top they roared until John Dexter was once again seated in the boat's stern.

They were many thousands of feet up when they flew over Paris. Both streams

searched the darkness headed on the surface?

But it was a search with which John Dexter had struck the water had created two terrible waves which made havoc of the machine's wings. Moreover, the length of heavy chain was dragging them down. Both planes began to settle.

Jack Harvey and Frank Cooper clambered out of the cockpits, and as they did so a mighty hand closed over each of them.

It's all right, said the voice of John Dexter, "I can swim. French yourself, as to my shoulders. I'll get you ashore all right."

He dropped all the cumbersome basket seat, and then the two men found their selves seated on John Dexter's tremendous back.

In a few moments the giant was swimming ashore. He cut through the water at an amazing speed.

Jack Harvey calculated that they were about five miles from the English coast, but these five miles were to John Dexter who had a map of the sea in his mind. It seemed to Jack that the giant was cutting through the water with the speed of a motor boat.

Suddenly they felt themselves lifted into the air.

"Hang on," said Dexter's voice. "The touched bottom."

With the two airmen hanging to his shoulders he went striding through the sea.

The plane caught sight of white cliffs ahead, and then the last glimmers of twilight faded. When they came in the white cliffs it was dark.

They found that the sea had bent up against the rocks, but fortunately the lift wasn't particularly high. Reaching up words John Dexter placed first Jack Harvey and then Frank Cooper on top of their boat. Holding a grip with his hands he pulled himself up.

He grunted once, but not a light was to be seen anywhere. They had evidently reached a very desolate stretch of coast.

John Dexter laughed.

"Well," he said, "there is your gentleman I met in England. I think the best thing we can do is to stay here until dawn comes."

They awoke the newspapers all over England did a nation, quite. They carried articles containing the words—"The Striding Terror." The news was splashed all over the front pages of the evening newspapers. For the story of the huge man who had been seen at France had been telegraphed all over the world. The French authorities had been from the ridiculous mistake, understanding the phrase that they were English machines.

"This enormous man is evidently coming to England," said the newspapers. "No body knows who he is or from whence he has come. All people living on the North coast are advised to remain within their doors until the coming of daylight."

But in spite of the newspapers one set with further news of news.

The Striding Terror behaved himself as usual.

It appeared that a ship on the Channel had seen the "plane" crash from a distance. The amazed crew had seen the huge figure of a man suspended between them, and him the vessel had come alongside the partially submerged wreckage of the plane. They had managed to grapple these wreckage and the huge ship had been pulled aboard. But there were no signs of the two pilots at their respective passages.

And all the time the Striding Terror was down on the North Coast waiting the coming of dawn.

Can Man Make MONSTER MEN?

Giants Made to Order

SOME folk may scoff at the idea of a monster man, a human King Kong, such as the author has created in this great new series, "The Striding Terror." But—

A scientist in the University of California, after working for four years on the ghastly plan, one of the Endocrine Glands situated in the centre of the head, has succeeded in finding a treatment which enabled a small child of ten, who had stopped growing, to shoot up five inches in two years.

In working on animals the scientist has produced a duck-sized dog four feet long, and he now believes he has found a growth "extract" which will develop giants or dwarfs almost at will.

Fifty-foot men may be walking the streets of London yet. . .

They were keeping as high as they possibly could, and just as the sea went down they saw the glint of the English Channel before them. Then again Jack Harvey was looking at his pistol gun.

They had lost so much petrol in their attempt to make a quick getaway that he calculated they would have only enough to get them across the Channel.

Could they get ashore while it was light enough for them to find a landing place?

On and on they flew.

Then the French coast was beneath them and they were over the Channel.

Jack Harvey was forecasting now. "This should have made another landing in France. The petrol was almost gone. They'd never get across the Channel."

One of his experts began to stammer and stammer. Could he keep going?

Then, abruptly, he felt a downward jerk. Looking out of his cockpit he saw Frank Cooper signalling to him urgently. Frank was going down.

Jack rushed down then. Frank Cooper had also run out of petrol.

His small net in a few has.

They were going down into the Channel in all probability this was the end of their strange adventure.

Both streams landed their machines unexpectantly. Instead of something they pushed them back, so that for a few

The Striding Terror came in England, grapples with him and there as if they were lifelines, while the streets of London and London Big Ben saw the tower and deliver a message in the "Striding Terror." That's what you have seen here read before—of in the next hour of the Striding Terror, it is "SCOOP" and more.

The REBEL ROBOTS

Genius No. 1 Rebels, Destroys
its Master and the Reign of
Terror Begins

★ ROBOT WITH A MASTER MIND

"DESTROY!"

The slender command structure in the head of the mechanical monster, shattered every other thought impulse in that average mass of delicate apparatus, reared its terrible strength down the length of the hallway.

His mind possessed of a device, he clattered to his feet from where he sat on the great steel chair before a column of machinery, walked with heavy, lumbering tread down the main gallery of the gigantic power house.

The place was like a cathedral, a vast domed building with a glowing central panel for an altar, glowing hard with thousands of tiny, twinkling lights, for the power, for the life, for the god Machine.

As he made his intention, way down the gallery the giant Robot passed slower and slower, metal workmen, twisted machinery, mechanical workings lumbering back and forth as they went about their duties.

He came to the end of the gallery, and with a quick dash he rushed out into a dark hall of steel and iron.



With heavy steps clicking on the metal floor he clattered across the hall, and open another door opposite and stood on the threshold, electric eyes flashing.

Before a disk of glass and steel, gleaming with twisted ribs and with colored controls, sat the grey-haired figure of Max Chancellor, Master of the Mechanical Panel.

With keen eyes gleared on a god before him, he was working at a mass of astronomical data.

He looked up sharply as a dull burner gave warning of the opening of the door. Then his thin, delicate features registered their horror as he saw and recognized the mechanical monster standing in the doorway.

It was Genius No. 1—the Robot with a master mind.

"My heavens! Run—!" The words tumbled from the lips of the scientist.

The command for Genius No. 1 had not yet been constructed, was he not, even now working at the figures?

And yet, here he was standing in the doorway of the old man's private sanctum. Danger in his very midst, his oil, his mechanical features—the Robot stood glaring at the scientist.

"Destroy!"

The word blinding and terrifying in his mind, the Robot lumbered forward.

Useless, the scientist wanted. Useless to call. Heep!—unable to stop that relentless force. Only the destruction of the mind, that delicate apparatus on the skull of the Robot, could render him helpless. Tense minutes, Max Chancellor studied at a button on his desk.

Then Genius No. 1 had reached the desk and without any warning, without any change of expression, the Robot raised his great steel arm and brought it crashing down on to the grey-haired head of the scientist.

A sixth sense warned the old man, and even as the death-dealing arm came bearing down he dodged aside, and took the punishing blow on the shoulder.

As John dashed towards the gleaming control panel the Rebel Robot raised the helpless body of Peter, ready to hurl it down on to the chattering machinery below.



He staggered back, holding his useless arm by his side. Back till he was against the wall. Back till the glowing eyes followed his every movement, and with one sweep of his great arm Genius No. 1 batted aside the leg, snatching it over so that its useless wrist flung, was snatched, lights faded with swift flashes.

Then he lumbered across to where the master of his creation stood cowering by the wall. The Robot's chest of hands were closed on the scientist, and the old man screamed aloud in his terror.

The steel arm of Genius No. 1 rose and fell again, and the scream was stifled in the scientist's throat. He slumped to the floor, striking on his death agony.

As though it were a piece of stone, the Robot picked up the body, raised it high above his head.

Even as he did so the door of the room crashed open and John Hughes, one of the scientist's young assistants, who had come to answer to his ring, came dashing into the room, horrified by the startling scene.

He stopped short as his eyes took in the ghastly matter, and, while he watched, Genius No. 1 raised the infuriated man above his head and sent the body crashing through the glass windows at the other side of the room.

There was a shattering of glass, then the dead thud as the body crashed down on to the stones below.

After staring at their horror the young assistant saw the giant Robot turn and he backed towards the door again as the terror came lumbering over to him.

Then, when the Rebel Robot was almost on him, the assistant's nerve gave. He turned and ran, yelling at his best.

Consciousness of the systems, but leaving only the deadly command, the Rebel Robot clattered on out of the room, back across the hall and into the power house.

For a moment he recovered the worst of thundering, unrelenting power—the giant dynamo. Its cone of light, the gigantic revolving globe in the centre of the dome, sending out its converging rays. Then he went over to the control panel, turned over two levers, whirled a great wheel, then clapped back two switches.

The result was catastrophic. A gigantic explosion sent the colossal fire photo. A vivid, glaring light flooded the power house. The great metal globe came crashing down, pounding the great machinery below it to a mass of twisted metal. Thundering power machines crashed in destruction.

The thinking in many of the power house became a riot of thundering fury. Metal boiled higher and thicker, walls fell, the great glass dome of the photo, slowly shattered by the explosion, came crashing down, falling glass in every direction.

His there, swathing smoke. Then the greater terrors of flame.

Blinded by flying bits of machinery, scolded by denouncing flames, Genius No. 1 lumbered through a hole that had been blown out of the wall of the power house and into

The Steel Man Disappears In The River



The army of Red Robots, a hundred strong, went striding after the Rebel.

the street, where terrified crowds watched the scene of destruction.

The streets were in an uproar. With the explosion in the power-house every Robot in the city had ceased to work. Dozens of public vehicles had become piles of twisted metal, and there had been crashes all over the city. Mechanical workers had come hurtling down from heights, all control gone. Robot servants had simply ceased to operate. The whole mechanized organization of the city was smashed.

And into this scene of disorder stalked the Rebel Robot.

Hardly able to lifting with a single blow of his giant steel arm any who stood in his path, he stalked into the country outside the power house and lumbered off down the road as if he had a fixed destination in mind.

A car came roaring towards him, burst aside to avoid him, but the glare of his lights smacked the Robot, and he hurled himself against the vehicle.

Creak! The car turned right over, and smashing to pieces, woodwork splintering. The Robot went flying, sprawling into the gutter.

But fury ruling his mind, Gears No. 1 picked himself up, went back to the wrecked car, and began feverishly to tear it to bits.

The railway became the scene of flying woodwork and metal, and two human beings came hurtling out with the wreckage.

Then, apparently satisfied, the Robot continued his interrupted way down the street.

Lights seemed particularly to infuriate the demon in his mind. An electric light standard was torn out of the ground and twisted to a mass of shapless metal. A shop window, glowing with light, was smashed to pieces, and the window sash scattered in a wild tangle of destruction.

People ran screaming from the park at the mechanical madness. And still he went stalking on in his terrifying error of destruction.

WILD-CHIEF John Hughes and Fritz Kester, old Max Chancellor's two young assistants, surveyed the ruins of the power house of the Robots.

"Poor old Max," gasped out John. "The work of a life time destroyed in a moment."

"Think God has not been to see it," joked Peter. "Heaven knows where the control room lies."

"The old man was working on it tonight," said John. "Told me he hoped to get it

fixed up by the end of the month. It's an irony, Pete."

It was, indeed, a mystery. For a year now, Robot workers, the servants of Max Chancellor, had been in use in the city—still, to a certain extent, as an experimental state.

They gained their energy from electric rays sent out from the one great power-house, and were enabled to work by the amazing apparatus in their skulls.

Into their apparatus so many thought impulses were implanted, and by means of intricate muscle controls from the "brain" the Robots were able to perform simple duties such as tending machines, domestic tasks, driving vehicles on regulated tracks, building and kindred labors.

Each Robot was able to accommodate to over ten half a dozen thought impulses, and these were regulated by means of switches set in the backs of the operators.

But for months now Max Chancellor had been working to create a Robot that could accommodate in its mechanism more than the thought impulses of the human mind—and more.

He had succeeded far beyond his sudden dreamer. Gears No. 2—the Robot with the master mind—had been created, but as far as control had been found.

Now, suddenly, this very night, were unknown agency had gained control of Gears No. 1, and the mechanical wonder the scientist had created had in turn destroyed him.

A terrible disaster faced the two young scientists. Latest reports from the police said that the Robot had last been seen entering the river. Seconds went out after him had been recklessly destroyed, but neither then the trace of it could be found.

"What can we do as we go to get?" gasped Peter.

"In the first place," returned John, "a new power house will have to be built. The Robot experiment must go on—it is a loss to mankind. And in the meantime we must work on at the control for Gears No. 1. If someone has gained some power over him, or he has obtained some natural control, there's no telling what will happen. Why, the human can be explained, and in time a whole army of these could descend on the city and wipe it out of existence. You realize that?"

"Gosh!" ejaculated Peter. "We'd better get out a warning. Machine goes to blow every the brain control will be the only safeguard."

"That's an idea," returned John. "Let's get to it."

The young scientists sent out their warning to the police, and the story of the monster was spread by the newspapers, broadcast over the radio.

But little did the scientists realize the terror that was about to descend on the city.

★ CROWN JEWELS ARE STOLEN

THE latest old castle, with its great towers and great battlements, stood in its gleamy pile into the starry lines of the night sky.

Light shined in the casement windows, curtains pulled back and fireplaces burning brightly light in the silent apartments. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, the bright blast of an explosion hit the main gate of the castle, smashing it to pieces, killing two sentries who stood near.

Through the smoking wreath of destruction stalked a great Robot, a mechanical man who clattered over the cobble stones of the courtyard, walked into the tower, mounting down steps as it went, lifting with mighty blows any who barred its path with sword or bayonet.

Up narrow steps, through a smaller courtyard, with its destination apparently well known, the Robot walked. It reached a heavily secured tower, smashed the door down with great blows of its steel arm, and walked into the tower where a steel grille, with a glass case behind it, stood in the center.

Even looking the mechanical man tore aside the steel bars as though they were as mere sticks, smashed the glass with a blow, and tore out the jewels that rested in their velvet settings—crowns, emeralds, amethysts of State, precious stones—the Crown Jewels of the country.

Unconsciously stuffing them into a sack slung about its neck, the steel being clattered back the way it had come.

Beginners were clanking soldiers running, as the Robot stalked down the steps again, and a line of steel awaited him when he stepped out into the courtyard.



The giant Robot stalked through the city of darkness, the helpless figure of Fritz Kester held under his great steel arm.

A dozen rifles flashed fire, but the shots broke themselves harmlessly in the steel plates of the mechanical man. One shot put out a flashing eye, but soon found that vital little weakness.

Then the Robot bowed himself into the line of steel, scratched his eyes and arms, killing and maiming as he went.

The screams of men in agony were rising from the courtyard as he lumbered on through the shattered dome, and, before with his one flashing eye, he swept away into the night.

As the men ran, they saw a large driver unloading a shipment of gold at the docks and saw little signs of one flashing eye behind a gleaming steel man before he went to sleep.

Two police guards standing near the gate late before they could get their shares to sleep.

Then the big man with an valuable head was being dragged away into the night, a mechanical man at the wheel.

Next morning the country was quiet. The newspapers spoke of the "Mechanical Terror," and MacQuarrie was called for creating the situation. A vision of a mechanical man descending upon the city and maiming men and women as they lay in their beds was captured up by the news news travel papers.

Terror was abroad.

Two nights later the city was done of a great, but was blasted to sleep by a new and deadly explosive that shook the whole city.

Thousands of pounds of solid coal, loaded and accurately discharged before the police could get near even to see the striking monster that were responsible. Two weeks later the town was quiet, the streets, but the money had gone.

The same night, too, while all the town was going to sleep, the most famous monster in the country, the most famous monster in the world, a fortune, a power, a wealth, and a spirit of politeness brought to the scene by the warning alarm, went to their death, and some of the most valuable people and who in the world were missing from their own next morning. But those who saw the steel terror that took down people—these men were called for ever.

The country lost its sense then. It became staggered, horrified. A man spoke of seeing a great creature rising out of the river, walking out of the water. The newspapers attacked the story.

In an effort to prevent panic, the Home Secretary called out the troops, and announced that the city. The newspapers said of the two young scientists, John Hughes and Peter Foster, and pressed that in a week they would have ready an apparatus that would render powerless the striking monster, designed to prevent the devoted pair that was bound to come.

John and Peter were agreed at the time they had no apparatus ready. They were so further advanced in their efforts to obtain a control that they had been on the day of the old scientist's death.

"It's an outrage," Peter said John. "If we could show them something at the end of the week, and the terror goes as well probably be crushed."

"There's only one hope," said John slowly. "And that's to get the power house ready—at least the big globe—and put out dominant thought separate into the hands of all sorts of mechanical workers. The people to destroy all Robots other than those with new minds doing nothing much."

"Back! That's all right," said Peter. "A battle of the Robots. But then light one another." Then he face, fell upon "But how on earth can we get the big globe working to work? There's another month's work yet."

"Get the Office of Works to help—recall every available engineer and an army of workmen. In a week we could be ready."

John TRANUM

The World Famous Parachutist tells SCOOPS how he will soon be

Jumping 15 Miles out of SPACE

He's going up as a piece of ballast

FIFTEEN miles up into the stratosphere in the open basket of a balloon. Then to jump out into space.

That's what John Tranum, the world-famous parachutist, wants to do now.

He has already made nearly two thousand jumps in all parts of the world—yes, even at Japan—and has been falling out of the sky since 1916.

He leads a dangerous life—flying and parachuting since the early days, climbing "planes for the big skies in the Spectator of Death, and jumping out of the clouds from all heights anywhere and at any time.

His greatest achievement was his recent jump from five miles up with a drop of four miles before opening his parachute.

Now Mr. Tranum goes to get fifteen miles up into the stratosphere and to drop within half a mile of the earth before pulling the rip-cord.

"And how do you propose to do this?" I asked Mr. Tranum, when I saw him, one of his lecture tours recently.

The famous parachutist, a friendly, alert young man with a thin, firm mouth and radiant smile, spoke quietly.

"An American scientist is coming over to England to make an attempt to go twenty miles up into the stratosphere in an open balloon. I hope to persuade him to take me up as a piece of ballast."

"Ballast?" I queried.

"That's right. Two hundred pounds of it. The scientist will have to take up ballast, which he will release as he goes up into space. I am hoping that he will take me up as part of the ballast for a distance of fifteen miles—then I will be the last two hundred pounds to be thrown over!"

"FASTEST POSSIBLE" FALL

"WHAT will you wear?" I asked.

At fifteen miles up what the sky is and cold last year. And what about the very low pressure you'll find at that height?

"The biggest difficulty will be the cold," rejoined Mr. Tranum. "I shall wear the special oxygen suit I used on my five-mile jump, and the oxygen

apparatus of course. Tests in a decompression chamber have shown that the low pressure at fifteen miles up—yes, even now—will not affect the human being to any great extent."

"But won't the speed of your fall through the terrific distance cause you to lose consciousness anyway?" I asked.

"At no time it was mentally supposed that a man who fell out of the sky from a great height was dead before he reached the ground."

John Tranum laughed.

"No. In my five-mile jump I reached the maximum speed at which it is possible to fall—I couldn't tell my feet. And I was quite comfortable. I could have gone on falling all day if necessary."

LIVESBUT OF THE AIR

"BUT what is the use of it all?" I asked. "Perhaps it was a pertinent question, but that was how it struck me, and probably thousands of people who have seen the film of John Tranum's delayed jump have asked themselves the same question. Apart from the thrill and adventure of it there really doesn't seem to be much use in jumping fifteen miles out of space."

But John Tranum was changed my opinion.

"Someone must experiment," he said quietly. "The experience gained by the man who first jumped out of an aeroplane with a parachute must have been the means of saving the lives of thousands of airmen."

"But flying through space will be as common as flying through the ordinary atmosphere is to day, and there will positively arise complications when the flier will have to leave them after he jumps and jump far."

"The experience I shall gain in jumping from the stratosphere will show whether the parachute in the 'Robots' for space fliers, and may be the means of saving the lives of the armies of the future. That is why I want to make this new jump."

The flier was dragged, backwaters combed, and every intricate systematically searched. But it was all in an hour. The day the first Robots seemed to walk into this air.

On the third night two attacks were made by the Robots. Two parties of four each descended on the city, and four each were killed, but fortunately the structure was not free of the Robots, called them to subterranean. What they had done for, and what happened to the other three Robots was a mystery. The structure was not followed them, but the Robots had simply walked into the floor that flowed through the city—and disappeared!

The following day the river was searched and dragged again, but no solution was found.



The Battle of the Mechanical Men

Then, on the fifth day, the ray machine and one hundred Robot fighters were ready.

No further appearances had been made by the Rebel Robots, and all the scientists could do was to wait. Then, at the first attack on Sunday, the Robot fighters would be let loose.

★ THE BATTLE OF THE ROBOTS

YOUNG Peter Kenter and his fellow scientist, John Hughes, went to bed dazed on that final night, when the work of building the ray machine was complete. All was set out to put the sleeping rays into the Robots, and the scientists could sleep a little more peacefully in mind.

When the little electric clock in the scientists' quarters next door to the power house struck the hour of two Peter was dozing fitfully. A pale shaft of moonlight was glinting through the blinds in which both he and John slept.

Then, for a brief moment that shaft was blotted out. A dark something was out there against the night sky, then the window crashed to fragments.

Next moment a great steel arm, at least six feet in length and dipping with water, came creeping through the shattered window. Its clawlike fingers closed over the sleeping figure of Peter Kenter, and lifted him bodily out of the bed.

Peter jerked to terrified wakefulness to find himself passing through the room in mid-air at the end of a great arm. His feet touched the narrow path that rose to his throat.

John, awakened by the rattling of the window, burst out of bed and stood petrified as he watched the fiendish dragon, through the window in the grip of that terrible something.

Then he leapt to the window and gazed ahead as he saw a great Robot—at least twenty feet in height—sliding down the street with the helpless body of Peter Kenter clamped under one great arm.

Passing only to cling on and shake, John clutched out of the room, and came to the power house.

It was a house of lights, and glowing semicircular screens threw back into the bright of the dome above. A great new brass globe was poised in the center of the dome, ready to send out its covering rays.

The night shift was still working guttural up structural fittings, but John took no notice of them. He dashed across to the glowing control unit, heeled over two levers, whirled the wheel, and then closed another control.

The machines roared to life. The great brass globe began to revolve, slowly at first, then with a hum as it went whirling round, glancing in the bright lights of the power-house.

Nowly, the silent Robots, being slung about the power house, got in their feet, and the same strange, silent army started to march to the door at the end of the hall.

From outside a night of the best terror would be enough. The only men John had seen was that Peter might be injured in the battle that was about to come.

The Rebel Robots invaded the road, and John, leaning the way, leaped with relief as he saw the great steel figure in the distance.

The Robots had sighted him too. John was out of bed, and in seven seconds the chase was on.

For three miles the red army followed that lonely figure, and as they neared along the significance of tonight's contest came to John.

The man who controlled the Rebel Robots—if man it was—would have of the shielded eye of the power house. The papers were so cunningly the story. Probably the two pounds of Robot were the other night had come to destroy the place. They had failed, and now this new plan, a finer among

Robots had captured Peter—perhaps as a hostage.

Then John realized they were moving the prize; the fresh seal of the water came to him.

Next moment they were on it, and to the young scientist's amazement and horror he saw the great Robot take the flight of stone steps in two strides. The floor formed, and was set in time to rise the steel walk and sink right into the water. He gazed as he leaped himself down the steep steps.

Now the great Robot was lumbering through the mud and water alongside the embankment, and the Red Robots were coming down the steps. John peered anxiously at the edge of the water.

The Red Robots were almost as soon when he jumped down into the icy cold water, followed the great through the mud in this ghastly nightmare of a journey.

Then the Robot disappeared—John was watching him, his eyes on him all the time, but he simply vanished as if the water had swallowed him up.

The scientist dashed to the spot where he had last seen the great steel creature and there, as he stood waiting anxiously in the mud, another Robot, one of the smaller Robots, hurried himself out of the water. The smaller, and another, until there were at least ten.

Then, suddenly, John cranked against the wall.

Then, before the steel men could even get him, the Red Robots leaped themselves at the Rebels. Steel clashed, water rang up into a fury, mechanical screams went shrieking into the water as, led by deadly enemies, they fought one another.

It was the strongest battle that had ever taken place in the history of the world, and as he watched John was strangely excited.

The water boiled to a fury, mud churned up, pieces of steel, rare parts of mechanical men, were flung in all directions.

But John was lost before in the fight as he saw more Robot Robots rise up out of the water. Somewhere down there, he told him, with the great monster had taken his pet Peter, and he had got to follow.

Falling a deep breath, he plunged into the muddy water from which he had seen the last of the Rebel Robots rise.

★ UNDERGROUND POWER-HOUSE

HE went down on the circular planks of light in the side of the embankment, and plunged for it. Even as he went hurtling through the circular opening he knew he had solved the mystery. It was the opening from a sewer, and, being leading, he came out at the other side, got above the level of the water and found himself in a great circular sewer hole. It was brilliantly lit by electricity, and was evidently the entrance to an underground stronghold of the Rebel Robots. He heard the thrum of an air pump.

And a little mysteriously he made his way along the evil-smelling place, waded through the slime until he reached another hole opening out of the main sewer.

He took the track, and knew he was right when the thrum of power increased, when he came out into a great arched vault glowing with machinery.

His eyes took in the scene in one brief glance. The great machines, the huge globe in the top of the vault—just like the three men power-house—the great steel gallery running all round the top of the—

Then John saw the Robot who carried Peter. He was lumbering along that great steel gallery, along to where a strange old man stood leaning at a door leading from the gallery.

Knew in John saw the figures he knew that the strange old fellow had seen him, too. The man stalked with long grey hair hanging down each side of a pinkish face, and he wore a suit of black that seemed to hold the ground.

"Come! Come!" John could hear the dull, monotonous voice of the old man even from where he stood.

In something like a panic John took a dash automatic from his pocket and pointed it at the old man.

"Stop that Robot!" yelled John, and he saw the old man's gleaming yellow fangs as he snarled down at him.

"Stop! Stop!" he screamed, and his voice was that of a machine. "Stop, and I shall cry, 'Destroy! Destroy!'"

At the head words the great Robot halted sleepily on his way along the steel gallery, and passed breathlessly.

In that brief moment John had a terrible thought. "The word 'Destroy!'" The Rebel Robot would probably take it as a command.

With terror in his heart he dashed across the steel floor of the vault towards the glowing control panel.

Even as he moved he saw the smaller Robot seize the helpless figure of Peter high into the air only to hurl it down on to the three-driving machinery below.

He saw, too, the strange old man dashing towards the Robot, crying, "Destroy! Destroy!"

Then he had reached the glowing panel, pulled back the lever, flung the switch.

Breathless with horror John saw the figure of his friend drop from the hands of the Robot, though for one terrible moment it would crash down as to the room from below; then leaped again as he saw Peter catch on to the steel rail, hang there, . . .

But the great spinning globe had not stopped yet, and John saw still some power left in the hand of the Robot. That great steel arm rose again, ready to destroy the first thing with which it came in contact.

The strange old man was that first thing. The great steel hand caught at the man, lifted him as though he were a child and hurled him down into the heart of the glowing machinery below.

The Robot, devoid of all power now, crashed into him.

John dashed for the steps leading to the gallery and hung himself up. Then in time he dragged the last fellow, Peter to the safety of the steel gallery.

"They found their way as though the collar of the old waste pipe there."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The mystery of the old man who had controlled the Rebel Robots was solved when the police went through his papers and found in the old house above the great vault, and found the moving bottom in a great steel safe.

He had been Max Chancelor's right-hand man many years before, when both were working on the occasion of mechanical men. They had operated and worked just when they found success, and each had gone his own way.

But the mind of the old fellow in the underground power house had cracked, and, convinced with poison when Chancelor's Robots were set to work in the city, he had planned a contest that would seal off the Robot workshop where he had built his great power plant under his own hand, leading out of the sewers, and when Chancelor created the Robot with a mind of a genius the other one tried to control it. He succeeded, and created the power of the Rebel Robots.

During the month after the capture of Gurus No. 1 he had begun to construct other Robots of a similar design, setting them to work to create themselves in such way as possible.

Finally, as a background for himself, he had built the great Robot, and this he had sent out to get the young scientist.

"The man who creates a thing to destroy will, in the end, meet his own destruction from it," was John Hughes' verdict, and both he and Peter Kenter are now working where old Max Chancelor left off—to create a race of magnificent mechanical men for the service of mankind.

Here's a SCOOP

Modern Marvels, Scientific Wonders, and all the great new Inventions of this Amazing World

THIS PAPER FOR ALL

THIS is a newspaper more everything than a Times, or even of the ordinary, something others haven't got, is a scoop.

Here, then, is a paper full of good stories—all things. They are scoops because they are different, but also they look ahead with the vision of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells, whose fiction stories of science and science, declared impossibilities at the time of publication, are now fact.

SCOOPS is a paper for all. It has the thrill of adventure and mystery and will transport its readers from the everyday happenings into the future, with all its expectations of development and discovery.

As a story paper, SCOOPS stands in a class of its own. It arrives at a time when all the world is wondering what the next new and amazing discovery will be. In its stories SCOOPS will endeavour to anticipate the marvels of the age in which we live.

This will be partly its claim as the story paper of to-morrow.

THE AGE OF WONDER

WE are living in a wonderful age—perhaps the most marvellous in the whole history of the world.

The thirty thousand years of the prehistoric centuries have seen many progress than any modern period since the dawn of civilisation.

Men no more than thirty years old have seen the coming of the aeroplane, the motor-car, electric trains and buses, and great submersible boats—inventions which have nearly covered the transport of the world and changed man's whole view of time and distance.

Today, Australia is within a week's journey of the Netherlands, and the steaming in the mighty Atlantic is now less than thirty-six hours.

These progress have watched the advent of communication by means of the telephone and wireless, so that nowadays a man may pick up his telephone and speak to a friend 11,000 miles away.

In Australia, or set in his own house and listen to a band playing in an hotel 3,000 miles across the sea in America.

In their forty years on earth they have seen the dawn of Great Britain transformed. Great buildings have risen—great factories, with marvels of modern machinery, paper mills and huge blocks of wonder houses. Powerful express-trains at speeds of more than a mile a minute cover 31,000 miles of railway lines. Four thousand miles of cables, carried by tall pylons, bring electric power to the farms and villages, the cities and towns.

For their comfort they have been given electric light in their homes, electric gas fires, and a hundred and one labour-saving devices. For their entertainment they have been presented with the cinema, with its talkies and coloured moving pictures, the gramophone, motor racing and the speedway, the world's greatest singers and the most famous orchestras by their own choice.

They have seen life-saving machines perfected by the wonders of the age—the X-ray and ultra-violet rays, and the marvellous inventions and discoveries of modern medicine and surgery.

This is, indeed, the age of miracles, and those of us who will live for another forty years may see wonders performed that would make the hair of even the most superstitious women of the old stand on end.

ROBOTS FOR \$10

TO-DAY Fiction—to-morrow fact.

No more than a week after one of the best stories of this issue, "The Robot Robots" had been written, came news from our scientific correspondent in New York that an attempt to construct a mechanical man also was in the air, as well as to be made by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The "Brain" of the new robot is an accomplished fact. It has been invented by Norman B. Krut, a New York engineer, and he claims that it will give the robot thinking powers similar to those of a human being.

In the robot that is to be constructed a motor and thermostat will represent the nervous system of the human body, and it will respond to the stimulus of colour by means of an electric eye, or photo-electric cell.

A secondary motor, representing the voice gland, will be controlled by sound action on an electric eye.

The most amazing feature of the new invention is Mr. Krut's assertion that one of these mechanical men can be built at a cost of no more than \$10.

With an unlimited supply of cheap mechanical labour such as this new invention would make possible, cities very soon like the one realized in the story "The Robot Robots" may indeed become fact instead of mere fiction.

OUR FREE GIFT

FOR those who are going to get lots of enjoyment from SCOOPS, Clubboard Friends, which we present to you as a Free Gift this week. What you have wondered is getting it and is so sorry for the one person on page 19. There are some things here gifts waiting for you.

We are anxious to give you just the things you really enjoy in a weekly paper, and that reason we would be glad to have from you.

What do you think of it now? We would value your kind opinion.

PROFESSOR A. M. LOW TO WRITE FOR "SCOOPS"

MAX is always looking round for fresh material to suggest.

Since the day when Columbus set out in the Santa Maria to prove that the world was round and found instead the "New World," man has gone from compass to compass, until today few things are left on earth for man to discover or explore. Only Everest remains unexplored, and even that may have been conquered if the gallant Lewis and Mallory reached the summit before they went to their death.

Man is therefore looking beyond the earth and searching out into space for his quest for something new to conquer.

The astronauts of the U.S.A. have gone 21.5 miles up into the stratosphere, and already many experiments are being planned to go higher still.

Who knows what may be found in the strange, unexplored regions of space beyond the atmosphere that we call "Earth"?

No one knows, but many can imagine and prophesy, and because we wish to be the first to present to you the story of this thrilling new world we have asked one of the world's most famous scientists, Professor A. M. Low, to write for SCOOPS a series of stories.

Look elsewhere in the stratosphere.

Professor Low's great story "Space" begins in SCOOPS tomorrow.

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ROCKET

A thousand miles into the Unknown, with the deadly menace of the Terror Beasts of Space



There was a thundering explosion, a sudden crash of glass and steel, and the gleaming space ship went hurtling through the glass-domed roof of the workshop.

★ THE SPACE MACHINE

"THESE are my friends and you know it," he said. "You know," grinned Bart Allen.

A momentary expression of concern crossed Professor Baranyan's face, but he quickly turned away as he instinctively recalled his second breakfast nap.

"I'm not altogether surprised," he murmured. "I often thought that troops we second of the previous century would not all be opposed to war."

"And you were right, professor," he said. "I was a disappointed reporter, were enough. Like to read what he's cooked up about it."

"I certainly should. I don't expect it's anything very complimentary."

The Professor was right once again. When he glanced at the front page of the newspaper Bart found that he had—

FIFTY MILLION!

Professor Baranyan's Amazing Prop. Yesterday's New Special Representative who is writing a series of articles on "The Life of a Citizen," chuckled as a first waking report and the wild of Bart's news.

At the Old Old Place, in the north end of Tavistock, he was astonished to meet, and the famous physicist and astronomer, Professor Baranyan, six months ago the Professor was reported to have gone away on a long and never for his health. It now appeared, however, that he had been at the—

Here, indignantly, interrupted by a delivery from building, an elaborate glass—

It, shrouded in the mist of war, the Professor and his assistant, Bart Allen, have constructed a world perfect flying machine.

With instantly built the Professor and his assistant secured a formidable body of evidence for a number of the Press, and the representation was already—about all he knew he could secure than a glimpse of the machine. It appeared to be in the nature of a great, stream-lined body, with a brilliantly polished metal surface. It was mounted on an acute angle on its elevated platform, the rear pointing towards the glass roof of the workshop. As a flying machine it looked about as new as a high explosive shell.

And yet it was suggested in the night-herald that the "Hill Flying Machine" and its assistant proposed to project themselves into the air, and hope to go first into space.

If this is so we really think it true that they were both placed under some form of outward or inward force.

Well, what does that, at the moment?" chuckled Bart, as the machine had been the paper.

"Like most newspaper reports," said Baranyan drily. "It's fairly accurate in so far as a guess—but, unfortunately for us, it doesn't go far enough."

"The 'it' said it, fifty miles! I reckon if they know what we were really doing they'd slap us into street jackets—straight away!"

"They probably would, but, all being well, we shall have the Rocket launched and be well away before they turn out any more, and perhaps arrive in time to see it in the air."

"You're right," chuckled Bart. "Right for the first chucking, every day's all right for the big kick off!"

They went from the table and prepared to go out for the final chucking Bart had mentioned.

Baranyan was nothing like the traditional about-headed professor. He was compact, middle-aged, somewhere between thirty and forty. His clean-shaven face was stern and apathetic. Only his high, domed forehead and a slight scholarly stoop at the shoulders of his lean, muscular figure indicated the source of his towering aloofness in the realm of physical science, which had gained him international renown and a certain amount of respect from his more ambitious colleagues.

From Allen was about fifteen years his junior. Roundly built, he was rather much-loved and inclined to be lively, with a light-hearted, innocent smile that was never very far away from his eyes. In addition, he was a keen sportsman and devoted his energies to the practical application of Baranyan's ideas. Together they made an ideal pair.

Now, Bart, excited as they stepped out of the snug living room at the back of the house, had been their quarters for the past six months. "I reckon there won't be any reports or happenings excepting around to day anyway."

A slow, clinging fog swept over the ever condensing beachhead, and they made hastily on a rapid in front of them as they made their way to the glass-domed workshop, where a machine driving down their garden the heart of the morning Flying Rocket.

Baranyan was just unfolding the door when the noise of a motorcar came. "Be sure," came faintly to their ears through the swirling masses of fog. They looked at one another.

"A post," smiled the well-known glider.

"And that means an escape," chuckled Bart.

"A motorcar making a desperate bid for liberty under cover of the fog. I don't know why they do it. No one has ever got away with it. At the best, it only makes a few days of being hauled here prior to post the next morning."

"Perhaps it was just some actual experience of being caught up the other day in the same dark surroundings, and consider a look, for ever thirty-five that was some thing worth while."

"You're probably right, professor," chuckled the young mechanic. "It must be so, but, I don't suppose the poor thing, whoever it is, will get anywhere near here."

Striking that machine, as it is called themselves of the great and grey sheets of power with which the clouds have and covered in their magnificence, they pushed back the sliding doors and entered the workshop. Every minutely verified on the table supplied from their own purely in skilled electrical plant.

"There she is, professor," he chuckled. "All set for the next experiment, just as it was. Her eyes glowed with pitiless light as they heavily swept over the brilliantly polished surface of the giant steamroller torpedo described in the newspaper report."

Despite this the Rocket had been pushed and launched in a fairly satisfactory

of DOOM

engineering works, but every one of them had been assembled by Brent's own hands under the scientist's expert supervision.

And now the gleaming machine rested on its shock-absorbing launching platform, apparently tuned for its mighty leap into space. As a matter of fact, it was set at an angle of exactly forty-five degrees, with its stream-lined nose accurately aimed at the glowing disk in the sky.

"Yes," continued Brent, "there's nothing to hinder us sliding back the door, stepping right inside, and starting off straight away."

Barrymore shook his head.

"Not just yet," he said. "We can't afford to leave anything to chance. You're using over seven single firing, and I'm looking over my calculations for the final adjustments to be made in the gravity ventilation."

With a gasping "O K, go on!" Brent had already disappeared inside the metal door of the gleaming atom body at the Rocket, when the thick air of an aeroplane flying very low overhead pulled the scientist up with a jerk.

"The foul!" he muttered in astonishment. "Trying to make a landing in this fog! He'll be smashing everything up if he isn't careful!"

The Professor's first idea was that the plane, probably carrying some important newspaper man bent on being first on the spot to secure an exclusive interview.

Based with fears that as it tumbled back on top of the workshop might upset all his plans, he took the door and rushed into the fog shouting and frantically waving his arms.

It seemed he was already too late to avert disaster. There came the splashing crash of a forced landing among some trees close to his lab. Perking up at once, however, that it had at least missed the vital shop, he tried to shrilly through the fog towards the scene of the accident.

Momentarily Brent's eye was attracted as far as he could get out of the Rocket and down off the launching platform.

"There are you, partner!" he yelled into the fog. He was answered by a startled cry that seemed to cut off very suddenly. Then came more cries. The fog showed glimmers of faint approaching headlights, and a valley of wailing and alarm.

Brent had no time to get his startled wits together. He was suddenly hurled back into the workshop by the impact of those wailing "coming to land."

He sat up, nervously rubbing his head to find himself flying into the middle of a great automobile. The figure behind the wheel was drenched in convulsed gasp, only partially covered by a light raincoat. The face above it was then lifted and utterly motionless.

"Dark! Headless!" gasped Brent.

"You know me?" that's face," snarled the crank. "I want you come telling you that if you don't do just what I say you'll be torn up in a flash, you'll never know what a hot you!"

★ THE ROCKET SMASHES OUT

R. K. RENALDO! Brent didn't care his instant occupation to any great personal acquaintance with the expert. A few months before, the ruthless, thin-lipped face had been pictured in every newspaper in the country. His full name was "Rocky" Renaldo. He had come originally from America to give British science men a lesson.

He had made the fatal mistake, however, of trying to land too lightly. The last day, five months ago, he had crashed at the back

of the city of London he had been used to when a desperate gun fight, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. And now he had made an equally spectacular escape from the great prison on the coast.

Brent's eyes turned to the crank's two companions. They were Renaldo's first tenants in case, Slim Kelly, and Tommy Gatti. They had engineered the outside end of the engine, Kelly was in the flying lot of an air-pilot.

The plan had been to fly Renaldo down to a landing on the Continent. But a wonder's lucky shot in the plane's petrol tank had caused the forced landing which Professor Barrymore had rushed out to investigate. The crank had also attended to the spot a strong sense of armed warfare scoring the moon on a powerful car.

"Here they come, boys!" snarled Kelly.

"Give 'em a hand, Tommy!"

Tommy gas Gatti didn't need any second telling. He had lagged his fantastic side machine gun from the workshop place. With a wailing gasp he thrust the rounds into the great sliding door of the workshop.

At once a deadly, snarling beast sprang death and confusion into the fog outside. With cries of alarm the changing warden scattered wildly in terror.

At once Gatti, opened another burst to speed those things; then he and Kelly checked the door to gather and secured them.

"Good work, Tommy!" approved Renaldo, who still had his gun on the side of his head.

"I guess that's given 'em something to think about!"

"Here now, Chief! But they're a—"

Renaldo gave a hoarse chuckle.

"Maybe they have, boys, but we won't get lost now. I guess we've scared them out of their feet even greatly already, and

it's the hope for us now if we're caught in any case. No matter what we do, we can't be any worse off—"

"Say y!" snarled Slim Kelly suddenly.

"What's that, boys?"

After the first time he had found a breath-taking to take in the gleaming surface of the Rocket.

"Get!" said the victim little into his

mouth. "I believe it's the newangled fly, he's making us find another about in the papers this morning!"

Renaldo was instantly all attention.

"Flying machine?" he snarled, jerking his heavy automatic.

Yes, boys. Goes off fireworks or something. Fifty miles straight up in the air—what's that paper said?"

A snarl "What?" snarled the old crank, a gleam of desperate hope coming into his eyes. It was evident that he had heard about another experiment on the same line. Slim Kelly, his assistant, instantly fully aroused, had already disappeared inside the gleaming body of the machine. He reappeared in the metal doorway.

"That's what a thing of the controls, Chief—"

Crash! The heaving warden outside the workshop hadn't been able to see the machine.

They were now making a gallant attempt to force in the door with a few break battering ram. Gatti, using round with a snarl, his deadly machine gun at the ready. But Renaldo waved him aside.

"Come on, boys!" he yelled. "We're nothing to lose, and we're gonna take a chance! Up on the platform and inside! You too!"

He snarled, slugging his automatic into Renaldo's ribs. "Have your gun close to how to work it!"

And despite Brent's time-honored protests that he was only a mechanic and does not meddle about with the Rocket in the absence of Professor Barrymore, he was hurled with the others into the body of the machine.

Crash! The stout workshop door sagged against under another terrific impact of the battering rams.

"Get out! Get out! Get out!" snarled Renaldo.



The handsome tentacle came slithering in through the outer valve, and the gangster screamed his horror as it curled round his body, lifting him clean off his feet.

Stolen Rocket Thunders Into Space

"I don't know a thing about it," said Brent in a desperate attempt to hold long enough for the waiters to leave their way in. And it seemed he would be successful.

Laugh! The time the doors were torn down off their pivots and the jolliest waiters came tearing in behind them. At the same moment film rolls took a desperate chance. He kept beyond in the gleaming, unobscured panel and hoped down a hair, which looked something like a double curtain.

Instantly there came a tremendous, whirling race down the tail of the Rocket. The waiters were scattered and tossed about like chaff in the cyclonic back-draft. Then up it shot, smoothly as an arrow from a well-tuned bow, to dart its way down through the glass-faced roof of the work shop.

And then, to those below, there was only the fast-flying edge of its smoking nose as it headed its way upwards through the swirling banks of fog!

★ A THOUSAND MILES UP!

RENAIDO was plunked. "We've broken 'em, and got 'em hot," he gasped, vainly trying to peer downwards through the speeding Rocket's thick glass ports.

Contrary to expectation, there had been practically no upset or jar inside the machine from its tremendous take-off. The flow of the main chamber was smoothly adjusted on hydraulic buffers to prevent kind of any firing angle from horizontal to forty-five degrees. It was at the latter angle that an astonished crew was now staring into space.

"The film flow" chuckled the gasp-bender, apparently. "I reckon we'll soon be able to level off and go wherever we want to."

"Oh, oh, we'll see," gasped Renaido, whose stomach was now rapidly recovering from

the first localized effect of those suspended take-off. "The Rocket, you said, is at its maximum and angle under its own power."

The prospect eased at him again. "Don't mean it can ever keep on climbing," gasped Renaido, the moment.

"For exactly one hour and twenty-five minutes from the take-off."

"And then what?"

"Then shooed his shoulder. "I'm not saying, because I don't exactly know. But I warn you, if anybody let us start monkeying with the controls, we'll hit the earth so hard that it'll be quicker to dig us out from Australia."

"Why the one hour and twenty-five minutes beam?" challenged Renaido.

"Don't shooed his shoulder again. "An' we'll all be the same best," he mumbled sadly. "I suppose I ought to try to explain things to you. But I'd better see about turning on the oxygen first or we'll all be suffocated."

Renaido groaned from the front of his machine's controls.

"Say, boss," started the giggler again. "What are you trying to get over on us?"

"His close-set eyes flared to an extreme on the gleaming instrument panel. It was marked in bold figures from one to ten. The indicator was creeping up to the two mark.

"You're not gonna bluff me that we've worked oxygen at less than two thousand feet!"

Brent looked at him with a plying grin.

"No, I'm not going to tell you that," said the scientific machine, quietly. "But we do need it at the altitude we're at now."

That particular shooer is related to units of one hundred miles."

Renaido's jaw gaped.

"Say, you're not gonna bluff me that we're up that high?" he asked. "I know my cosine, and I just ain't possible!"

Renaido thought it was time he came into the picture. He swung up his own trade automatic.

"Up gentle two hundred miles," he grunted, determined. "You can't get what you wish to throw a rope into us with that like that. Come right off it, or you'll get the works, people!"

"All right," gasped Renaido. "Have it your own way."

They pulled at him uncertainly, and then the water-tight door got his head up to his throat.

"Gee, boss," he gasped, "something is pretty kinda funny!"

"Now it is," said Brent brightly. "We've been flying on the air we brought up in the Rocket practically since we started, and it's beginning to get hot. And it's no good opening a port for a fresh supply. There's no air outside now! We're travelling up at a steady speed of nearly six miles a minute, and we will beyond the limit of the earth's breathable atmosphere—"

"Seventeen miles a minute!" gasped Renaido, turning slightly green.

"That's near enough on a basis of a thousand miles an hour," gasped Renaido. "You can work out the exact figure for yourself if you like!"

There was something in Renaido's mad snarl of factors that set off corrections to addition the increasing thickness of the cloud up air inside the flying chamber spoke eloquently for itself. Without a word, the rockets staggered to the glass stern ports of the Rocket set over the firing chamber.

Except for a faint trail of exploded gas, there was practically nothing to be seen. It was darkness, however, that they were riding against at an enormous rate. And beyond the ports the brilliant trail-like clarity of short space compressed them especially that they had indeed penetrated deep into the mysterious realm as beyond the atmosphere. In addition, far, far below, they caught the merest suggestion of a wall, towering up, like cotton-wool—the upper surface of the clouds which enveloped the earth. (This story is continued on last of next page.)



The gigantic terror beasts of space hurled themselves at the speeding Rocket, long, whip-like tentacles curling round the gleaming steel.

★ DROWNED IN THE AIR

ZERO hour, or rather minute, was fast coming to the Rocket, still heading steadily upwards through featureless space.

The dramatic take-off had happened at exactly 10:36 a.m. on the chronometer, and now the mercurial hand was on the verge of 12 noon, one hour and twenty-four minutes later. This, as Brant had explained, was the calculated time necessary to traverse the 1,400 miles of 1,000 miles per hour up the lower side of a large right-angled triangle to attain a perpendicular height of 1,000 miles above the earth's surface.

"The power units are due to peter out at any second now," muttered Brant anxiously. His eyes were glued on the chronometer and shometer. The latter duly hovered at the 1,000 mile mark in accordance with Professor Burroughs's calculations.

The Rocket's interested passengers crowded excitedly round the mercurial as it revolved over the instrument board.

"Now!" he breathed. At the same instant the slight vibration came as the exploding turbine made the Rocket's homestead suddenly seemed still dead again. The atomized air rushed downwards and the hydrostatic buffered floor of the flying chamber swung up level in sympathy.

Brant peered a small lever over to the left. A shower of sharply-oriented needles seemed to move through every gleaming plate of the Rocket's fabric. For a split second it seemed to hover motionless on a level level. And then it was rushing downwards through space at a slightly diminished speed.

"It's worked!" cried Brant excitedly. "What's worked?" gasped Miss Kelpie. "That's happened!"

"The gravity mechanism! The repelling rays have cut out the earth's downward pull sufficiently to hold us where we are!"

"What were my worries!"

"Yes, but heretically. While in the position of a boy swinging a stone on the end of a string. The string in the boy, his disintegrated gravity pull is the thousand mile string, and we're in the stone at the end of it."

"You mean we're motionless round the earth?"

"Not exactly that. We're reading round and round with the earth revolving on its axis. The speed of the earth's rotations at the equator is approximately a thousand miles per hour. Our present position, in relation to the earth's surface, is the north pole. The equator doesn't make up for that, even with the help of one thousand mile gravity string, so our speed is slightly less."

"Buts me!" gulped the gangster alarm, shaking his head.

"What I want to know," sneered Brant, "is how far we're going to get down!"

"That's just what the gaffer won't tell me about," said Brant gravely. "If we cut out the repelling and start plunging down at a considerable velocity of thirty miles per second—oh, the end of a minute surely two thousand feet per second—g's a question of us could pull the Rocket up again. And I'm not going to risk hitting the earth a sailing from this height so long as our oxygen supply lasts—for about twenty-four hours."

"Oh, you you are!" sneered the oxygen drink gangster, waving his eyebrows. "You're going to risk a trip like this? We who have been longer I'd go mad!"

"Things looked very ugly for Brant, who was fairly determined to stick to his plan, when a hoarse, stung cry of mortal terror came from Tommy gas Galt.

There was reason for his alarm. When the others swung round to follow the direction of the gibbering gangster's quivering lips, they met a vision of horror that was never integrated in an earthly nightmare. An unspeakably horrible and huge pair of

fish-like eyes peered unblinkingly through the glass portholes at the sides of the Rocket. They were attached to a large, bloated body almost completely transparent and apparently of the same jelly-like substance as the sea anemone. Long, whip-like tentacles, like those of a giant octopus, radiated from the central mass and enabled the monster to hold its position on the speeding space ship.

And it wasn't the only one. There were hundreds more of the terrible creatures surrounding the Rocket on every side. They seemed to be able to keep pace with the Rocket with effortless ease. In "light" their bloated, transparent bodies seemed to float out parachute fashion to wall and glide about along through space at will.

The unblinked stare of the unblinking eyes beyond the glass shattered Brant's nerve completely. With a wild, hysterical laugh he jerked up his automatic, finger on the trigger, and aimed at the eyes. Just in time Brant dodged the weapon from his hand.

"Fool!" shouted the mechanic. "Get a bullet through that glass and with how an oxygen and sufficient water to happen!"

"If the gangsters covered down, being their faces at gibbering terror as more and more of the terrible creatures approached them from the speeding Rocket!"

"We're doomed now!" shrieked Tommy gas Galt.

And truth to tell, Brant wasn't in any position to contradict him. Staring in horror, the mechanic could hear the monsters sniffing their tentacles all over the Rocket's outer shell. Brant's eyes were trying to find some way to reach this strange net which had drifted into their ken.

And then Brant's eyes never popped from his face. A tell-tale film covered told him that at least one tentacle had found a joint in the Rocket's armor. It had forced its way through one of the suspension outlet valves. It came fluttering in its opening downwards while the pressure, life giving oxygen leaked through the partially opened valve into space.

"Look out!" muttered Brant. But the gangster, once-stunned gangsters were beyond heeding him. Like lightning the loose, transparent tentacle whipped round Brant's body and began to lift him upwards.

To add to his horror, Brant began to choke for the lack of the fast-moving oxygen. And then into his drowning lungs came the memory of two emergency life-liners which he knew had been in the Rocket. These consisted of portable oxygen tanks and masks.

His groping fingers found one and adjusted the mask over his face. And then, more by instinct than anything, he swung round and pulled the gravity regulator back to neutral.

Instantly the Rocket plunged upwards at an ever-increasing speed. Affected by the tremendous sweep through three space, the blood surging in Brant's headless head, his legs dangled in a deadly coil, he balanced his head on a wobbly line, he kept the gangster arm. Gradually, however, his attention as the flesh oxygen found its way into his blood.

He edged the lever back, gulped with relief as he found the downward sweep arrested and held, and then swung round, wide-eyed to see what was happening behind him.

His gaze was attracted toward his mask. It could be seen that a small, round, round object was still clutched around him, but it appeared to be loose and dead. The other two gangsters were also speared senseless through lack of air.

Brant's first thought was for them. Struggling out his knife he slashed at the dangling tentacle as well as clear the fatal compression wave. The bent hook slipped through the tough, jelly-like substance, and the monster's head and completely withdrew away through the hole it had made.

At first Brant could not understand this. Was the monster still alive after all? And then, through the soft lights, he plainly saw the bloated body shivering straight away. And he was satisfied that it was really dead. At the same time he realized that all the other monsters had disappeared from the Rocket's shell.

"The sweep certainly got rid of them," he breathed. "And I do believe the net that couldn't get there because of its trapped tentacle was destroyed." His theory was that the monsters could only live in some rarefied element in space, and that to drag them down into anything approaching the earth's atmosphere was equivalent to drowning a man in water!

But there was no time to think any more about this at the moment. The automatic closing of the suspension valve was now allowing sufficient oxygen to accumulate in the flying chamber to support life.

Brant tore off his mask and examined the half-suffocated gangster. He soon satisfied himself that they would pull round at 10:30.

"But before they do so," he resumed, "I'm taking charge of their gear. They were on I'm going to examine this stuff!"

Near midnight hours later the appearance of a vivid red flare in the early morning sky caused great excitement among a group huddled on the edge of a wide tract of open country in Poland.

"There he is!" cried an excited voice. The men, who were immediately gazed into a position of confusion, the spot where the flare had been seen to flash. Here the war's powerful headlights were swung upwards to act as landing guides.

And very soon the other end of the Rocket was discovered descending in a series of smooth, vertical stages as Brant carefully operated the gravity regulator. And at last it passed lightly as a feather on the rough mountain surface.

The first person to greet Brant as he stepped out on to terra firma was Professor Burroughs.

"Hello, gu'ner," greeted Brant. "I thought you'd be here to meet me. That's why I was here to stay up long enough to give you time to get here by ordinary plane."

"Everything go off all right?" beamed the scientist.

"Like a charm. Nothing to hinder us from going to the moon in no time at all. Only thing I didn't count on was a bit of a snow-tide of wild-goose hunting and desperate fishing in space—but you'll hear all about that later."

"And the criminals?"

"No need to worry about them, gu'ner," grinned Brant. "I've got 'em all trussed up ready ready for anybody who wants to collect 'em!"

"But," said a faithful reporter who had traveled all over the world to follow the "Mad Professor" from England, "how on earth do you know that the Rocket would come down just here, in Poland at all places?"

"Nothing at all in that," said the scientist patiently. "The Rocket was bound to come down approximately 950 miles east of its starting point. It was set due east to begin with, and 950 miles east of the base of the right-angled triangle of its flight—1,400 miles up at an angle of forty-five degrees—and a vertical drop of 1,000 miles 950 miles to the eastward. It was perfectly simple to make it end on a map of Europe and not nearly so wonderful as the animals forecasting of the appearance of a comet!"

"It beats me, anyway," gasped the reporter. "But all, boy, what a story!"

A world-known mechanic, called in the great planet Uranus, captures the transport space ship and organizes a revolt of the Uranian forces. The story is told in the book "The Challenge of the Gnomes of Cosmos. Read of the terrible battle that results in the great story. 'Lord of Space,' is now back in stock."

The MYSTERY of the BLUE MIST

*There it was again—that
Mysterious Blue Mist with
its terrible leering eyes*



★ EYES WITHOUT MAN

THE heavy lorry rumbled up Fleet Street and into the Strand. A single blue beam came from the left horn as it crossed the intersection at Wellington Street.

At a steady eighteen miles an hour it passed along the deserted street, and, from across the street where pedestrians and hawks like him made their beak along the clutter of the signpost. They looked, and the driver made a mental note that he'd reach Rangoon by dawn.

That was the last coherent thought of the driver until he returned to consciousness at a round at Charing Cross Hospital two days later. Peering through the glass of his window, he saw a pair of eyes—glare at him and a couple of yards ahead. Just two glancing eyes at a man's height from the ground. A pair of eyes that stared at him and faded just; eyes without a head—or a body. Just glancing eyes—hazel eyes—glaring at him from out of a blackish mist.

He swung the wheel of the lorry in sudden panic. The wheels of early morning sun shivered on the huge vehicle mounted the pavement and plunged into a deep tunnel. The lorry sagged over at an angle as one wheel broke through the top of a basement light; then, would the crack of the shattering glass and the thunder of the engine as the driver's foot worked on the accelerator pedal, the lorry came to a standstill.

Police Constable Graham, who had just entered the Strand from Bedford Street, was on the scene a few moments later. In report up to his superiors he mentioned that it was his opinion that the driver had dived at the wheel. The investigation had been directed at the time, but, before being commencing, the driver had repeatedly exclaimed: "Those eyes! Eyes! Take 'em away!"

On arrival at hospital, however, it was found that the man was suffering from a moment of the mist. Of all patients and personnel it was nearly universally agreed that a driver of a heavy transport without something to the effect of long legs at the wheel.

But one was being different—he who called himself "Eyes Without Man." He who—woman and newspaper—had almost been crushed beneath the wheels of the approach-

ing lorry. Only the driver had seen all three men to see of his—his eyes. And even as P.C. Graham and a local night-porter were lifting the screaming driver from his cabin, Eyes Without Man was hurrying through those streets, lost streets that surround Great Garden Market.

Nobody saw him—nobody could see him. Just a pair of eyes that glided along in the shadow of the buildings. Eyes that were suddenly unburied in a blue mist as they passed the deserted street lamp. Until they passed at an unaccountable door on Market Street. A face appeared at a height of about three feet from the pavement, rose slowly and asserted itself in the dark. Then it turned, and the door swung open.

Eyes Without Man entered, closed the door behind him, and mounted the stairs and up a long flight to the second floor. Again the door swung open, and Eyes Without Man—known to the caretaker of the premises as "Mr. Austin for once a week as you'd merry day!"—went home.

The single electric light avoided him, revealing a cheaply furnished room with either bed, a small table, books and a work lamp. . . and a six-foot column of blue mist from which glared a pair of eyes. Then the mist faded, as Eyes Without Man gave place to Henry Austin. A horrible spectacle that transformation—the blue mist fading and grating into a head. A head floating six feet above the ground. And then, grooving down from beneath the chin, the neck, the torso . . . and two hands. And lo! beneath them . . . nothing. And then from the trunk first one leg, and then the other, until the whole of the body was revealed.

A sight that would shake the stoutest nerves—but a sight that no man had ever witnessed. For in that transformation from mist to man was the secret of Henry Austin.

It long ago been a look against the wall. Nobody could see it—yet even Henry Austin had a blinding mist against the wall. Just the invisible chalk—an ordinary pavement where that were by Poly explosives—a two-pence worth that, stirring from the sides of the feet, was topped by a oval that revealed everything save the eyes. And then—and the secret of its terror.

As he prepared for bed, Austin was thinking of many things. Thinking of that day when his experiments with the spectrum had given to him the secret of producing a

Long Complete Story

chemically treated material that in sunlight would absorb all the colours of the spectrum, that would have no colours to reflect back, and would therefore be invisible. How he had found that artificial light produced slightly different results. How all the blue could not be absorbed, and how under such conditions—it became a bluish mist.

He thought of those hours of madness that followed the revelation of his discovery. Of the power that was now his—that could be used for good or evil. How his thoughts had passed to crime—of robbery, theft—a fortune for the taking. And how he had defeated his discovery in the service of the good. To take from the wealthy . . . to help the poor; to try to tilt the scales in favour of the underdog.

Eyes Without Man smiled a little bitterly as he thought of that time, even that he had not to hospital. He had thought—hadn't been looking, or hearing. Couldn't expect the driver to see him. Then he had looked up and seen the large looking down on him; had stood transfixed with horror for a moment, and then made a wild leap for the safety of a stone refuge. And the lorry had plunged into the shop-front.

Before closing his eyes in sleep he made a note to call in the hospital and search through the man's clothes. He'd had his address . . . and then he could help.

★ FLYING BAGS OF SILVER

THE young man who did duty behind the trademark counter of the Wren-Kill and Sebastian Bank's Atlantic branch had been thoroughly schooled in the methods to be employed in the event of attempted hold-up. But his apprehension of the apparently experienced was wasted.

Austin's second day in the role of Eyes Without Man unfolded with a lamentable breakdown in the manner of the bank clerk.

The Atlantic personnel had not opened its doors for the day for more than a few minutes when Austin entered. He held one of his specially placed hands to his eyes, counselling them from view, yet revealing him to see between the slightly open variable fingers.

He looked around, saw that the bank was empty of clients, and kept safely over to where a clerk was cradling out some bags of silver.

He stopped quickly and his fingers closed over two of the bags. They rose vertically from the counter and sailed through the air. Hardly believing his senses, the bank clerk stared a sudden warning. Automatically his back stretched at the weight on the floor that electrically closed back doors of the bank.

He cried quite automatically as he had been trained to act in an emergency. He had been cautious only of the two bags of silver being reached from the counter. But now, a second later, he realized that something was wrong. Even as he watched the bags sail towards the back—saw them and saw a flash as Egan Without Man slipped them over one of the pockets of his dark—dark young man scowled again. But this time there was no passing note in his voice—only panic, these pants.

Austin kept lights to the floor again and made for the door. He heard a shout from the manager's office and, well knowing, he saw two other members of the staff hurrying on. Still he passed the bank clerk acrossed again, and then there a quivering finger was outstretched. . . . Austin realized that the door had opened.

He hurried to the door and found it locked. Locked closed desperately, shaking his eyes with an irritable finger. He hurried to the door at the other end of the counter. . . . and realized that he was locked in. He coughed at silence, listening to the hysterical outcries of the clerk, the manager's voice speaking urgently to the police, his own voice shouting at the police, his own voice shouting that they could never catch him in his life.

He heard a car screech in a shuddering outside, then a humming on one of the doors. The manager hurried over, and four policemen entered in a bunch. The terrible man started across as an effort to escape, but the heavy door swung closed in front of his face.

His lips began to form a series of questions as the bank manager and the clerk. The three witnesses stood by the door.

And then two of the bags got caught straight up behind in front of my face and vanished. Then, a few seconds later, I saw a pair of eyes staring at me over there. And my back chair pulled at his purring breath.

The manager looked questioningly at the manager, and the latter spoke nervously. "No, he's all right. He's quite good, no harm." . . . And they all started to search for the missing silver.

Egan Without Man, crouching close to the three witnesses, tried of the warning. He'd got to suppress spontaneous enthusiasm—an appointment to meet to keep.

A police whistle blew shrilly, and one of the policemen glanced down in sudden excitement to his white laughing face in the pocket. A whistle, moreover, that was answered at the microphone.

"It's just like it," he replied to the inspector's angry enquiry. "I swear, so—it was locked away in my pocket. Then it blew right close to my ear, and here it is—still wet."

The bank manager looks at angrily. "There's something gone going to keep. But you're all right, no mistake. . . . Are we all going mad?"

The manager's eye suddenly widened from his head and half turned the room before it fell to the floor. For a moment the inspector was speechless. He didn't bother to retrieve his eye; he just gazed at one of the policemen at the door. "Go outside and keep an eye on these gentlemen—allow nobody to come in. I shall observe the station for some time. There's somebody hiding in this place—and he's not getting out."

The policeman snatched angrily and opened the door. Then he suddenly staggered for ward and pitched on his face. He sat up dazedly and glared around. "Somebody chased me." And I opened the door somebody pulled into the small of my back. Which way did he go?"

He saw the others staring at him as if he were mad. "I don't know to say," he said. And he pulled up his helmet and went back fully outside.

Egan Without Man, his variable lips curved into a faint smile, looked along the streets in the direction of Battersea. He didn't find a vehicle for fear of somebody seeing on later.

It was almost midday by the time he reached the block of tenement houses that was his objective. Yesterday he had overheard the conversation between Mrs. Brown, owner of the house, and Mr. Brown, her rent collector. And that conversation had prompted Austin to look it over in the service of the needy.

For Brown was in the grip of unemployment and three months behind with the rent for the two small rooms he lived in. And Mrs. Brown had threatened to throw out the Brown family unless the rent was paid up to date by noon on the morning.

Egan Without Man closed the long flight of stone stairs and led to the living room, shutting his eyes, went in. He saw the bedroom sitting heavily on its old arm chair waiting for the arrival of the collector; saw his back up with drooping eyes as the door swung open, and stared for a while before the table as Brown crossed slowly and sitting it down.

The terrible man smiled until the bedroom's back was turned before he swiftly emptied the two bags of silver on the table. Then he saw Brown sitting round at the front chair of silver and his eyes goggle at the scene of crime that had suddenly appeared.

Then a woman he judged to be Mrs. Brown came in answer to her husband's excited shouts, and Egan Without Man smiled pleasantly, as he heard these arguing as to whether they should take it to the police. And then they decided that Mrs. Brown must have heard of their distress, and he felt that he had heard Brown promise in a broken voice: "Thank you very much, when ever you see."

He went out into the street and saw that the early editions of the evening papers were plastering the story of the bank mystery. He saw a man buy a paper, glance at the sporting column, and drop it into a waste-paper receptacle. The terrible man thoughtfully stared it over so that he could read it as it lay amongst the other rubbish.

And as he read he saw what he had been fearing. The police were endeavoring to establish the connection between the heavy crash in the early hours of that morning with the subsequent strange occurrences at the Allright Bank.

As both cases, the paper pointed out, the victim had sworn they had seen a pair of eyes. But here the authority ended, for it was believed that the heavy driver had mistaken a blue coat, and no blue coat had been seen at the bank.

Egan Without Man waited until the street was completely deserted, and then turned the pages of the paper until he found the first he wanted; but a few lines announcing that Thomas Patrick, former gaffer of the murder of a City Banker, would be executed at Dartmoor Prison on the morrow.

The terrible man failed and hurried back to his room in Great Garden, being careful to keep his hand to his eyes. Once, with his heated vision, he collided with a passer-by. Holding back the words of apology that rushed to his lips, he hurried on, leaving a middle-aged gentleman to stagger into a chemist's for a hurried "pinkie" eye.

He had now slipped out on the heels of his room and Egan Without Man removed his cloak and became Mr. Austin, the rent-collector's perfect lodger. He'd got to do something about this Patrick case, he told himself as he began to eat. Patrick had killed a man, but that didn't mean that he should die. Moreover, the City Banker, had been a rat. He'd avoided Patrick out of his life savings.

Not content with that, he'd been responsible for robbing his victim of his employment. And Patrick, reduced to poverty, had resolved that he'd be right as well due at the end of a lifetime's work on a bench on the Thames Embankment. Patrick had killed Hamilton, and the law said that now Patrick must forfeit his own life.

Of course, there had been a public outcry. Public opinion was in favour of an appeal, but the Home Secretary had dismissed the appeal. Yet Austin told himself, in similar circumstances, he'd have acted as Patrick had and Hamilton deserved to die—Patrick didn't. And Patrick's motto.

★ THE KNIFE FROM NOWHERE

EYER WITHOUT MAN was clinging to the tattered sheet of a covered goods truck. He had decided that to get a lift on a second-hand goods train was the safest and surest method of his getting to Battersea. He dragged off of a wide side of the sheet of cloth. With only one sign and a ray of light, the goods to guide him he plunged into the misty night, and, some hours later, he found himself outside the gates of the prison. For the next two hours he waited about to keep warm until the noise of an approaching motor warned him that the world behind the walls was waking to a new day.

A porter came down in a half dozen the men's gate, and a small door at the side was opened to admit the porter. A couple of warders stood on duty at the entrance, but Eyer Without Man waited his opportunity and then slipped between them.

The execution was fixed for eight o'clock, and the terrible man had plenty of time to accommodate. He passed through another gate, showed a wall and found himself in an ordered yard. Then, standing against the back wall, he saw the first of the men that he had hoped Patrick to his doom. The terrible man, stretched like a wire against the first light of one of the prison lamps, shuddered a little. In less than an hour Patrick would be led out, and if something happened on the scaffold—something that could not be explained—then the Press and public opinion would assume the condemned man's reputation.

Eyer Without Man crouched at one side of the platform. He saw the stars disappear and that first flash back in the east gradually spread over the sky. Then a bell called somewhere, and the terrible man shuddered again as he saw the group approaching from the main building.

Patrick was in the middle, with head sagging on his shoulders, shivering a little. A prison warder, a man in a blue uniform, in low tones. And a couple of warders behind were the Governor and two or three warders. Patrick's arms were pinioned and, as he slowly ascended the platform and stood beneath the dangling loop, one of the warders passed a strap round his legs.

The noise was slipped round his neck, and only the dressing gown of the prison chaplain broke the silence. Eyer Without Man began to look up at the platform. He heard a sob from the condemned man's throat, saw the moving back exchanged between Governor and executioner. And, then as the trap door dropped to send Patrick to eternity, a knife flashed out of the empty air and severed the rope. Patrick dropped through the trap—in a dead fall.

Five minutes later, sitting astride the wall of the yard, Eyer Without Man saw that looking over his back to his cell. And he knew that Patrick was saved.

He returned to his room late that night happy and tired. He had picked up a daily newspaper on his way through the streets, and, as he slipped the terrible cloak from him, he caught a reflection of his own first face in the mirror. Yes, he was exhausted—and worried. The paper told him that the Yard was now convinced that there was a

Invisible Man cheats the Hangman's Noose

human agency behind the mysterious disappearance of yesterday's assail, and, assured to that by the Press, was determined to make a definite theory. Little more to sleep determined to carry on with his efforts to help the undertaker—said the Yard got him.

The undertaker awakened him with breakfast and a copy of the *Daily Herald*. "Good morning, Mr. Austin. I didn't hear you come in last night—but I suppose, as it's the case on the table and completed yesterday. But that's what I always say of you—always as quiet, always such a one for leaving yourself to yourself."

He had got to the door when she passed, "Just been reading about that three pair of eyes. Police station it must be a man who makes himself invisible. But you'll read it in the paper."

Austin hardly waited for the door to close behind him as he snatched at the paper. There it was—about all of it. The little affair, the heavy driver (who had recovered consciousness during the night), and the mishap in the execution of Pettibell. The police were inclined to believe that Eyes Without Men was responsible for the severing of the rope, but Press and police preferred to ignore it as a largely irrelevant. And so Pettibell was not to be hanged.

And then followed an interview with Chief Detective Inspector Hithers, of Scotland Yard. He explained an excited public that his department already had the invisible man under observation and that an early arrest could be expected. And, proved for some thing more definite by the *Daily Herald's* reporter, he stated that Eyes Without Men would be in for a look and key within the next twenty-four hours—more or less as Big Ben would strike four.

Austin smiled as he read it and nodded in his throat. Hithers was bluffing, of course. There could be no police trap him under observation—anyone who could not be observed! They were trying to bluff him into showing his hand—trying to frighten him off. Frighten him off, who had so much to do for those who needed him.

With his smile back and key within the next twenty-four hours as sure as sure as Big Ben would strike twelve. Nothing could be more certain than that. And yet? Yet?

Supposing Big Ben didn't strike? That would prove to the fact that these jobs were not such a simple one.

★ WHEN BIG BEN STOPPED

EYES WITHOUT MAN was standing in Richmond Square at half past eleven that night. The hub of the electric traffic was fast disappearing from the streets, and who was there to see that pair of thoughtless eyes directed on the huge clock face forming a couple of hundred feet above the pavement?

He climbed over the iron railing to the foot of the clock-tower and went round to the door that would admit him to the building. He was alone. He tried other doors, and all were locked. Parliament was not having a late sitting.

He went back to the foot of the clock-tower, then—narrow and narrow did he started to climb. The curved stair offered abundant foot and hand hold. And as he moved slowly up out of the light of the electric street lamps the blue tint that enveloped him gradually faded so that only the two eyes and nothing more remained. He passed for hours on a ledge many feet higher, until the striking of the quarter urged him to renewed effort.

He started again, finding such projecting bits of masonry before he moved a few feet higher. Once he almost fell as a large clock spoke swung and crashed to fragments in the road below. He saw a policeman look up, and the policeman was nothing—only the great clock that had great London

as none for the next thirty years, bounding over that fifty every fifteen minutes of every hour of every day—for eighty years.

Eyes Without Men swung himself up and over the projecting ledge at the bottom in the huge face. His fingers found a grip on one of the interstices in the glass. Clinging there, he peered for breath. Then he climbed up the interstices until he reached the centre spindle. He leapt for the opposite hand and his fingers found a hold, slipped a little, and gripped again. Started to swing himself across the face until he could get a grip higher up on the minute hand, and tried another foot against the hour hand. Until he was standing on the centre spindle.

It is inside the clock he withdrew a piece of stout steel, and thus he wedged between the hands that came lower together with every passing minute. He clung there until the next tick of the minute hand brought it up against the steel. And so, at three minutes to midnight, Big Ben tolled for the first time in its history.

Eyes Without Men realized that he had got to get down and get away before the watch started to gather in the Square below. He leaped forward from his big hand which was grasping the spindle, came swinging with arms stretched out—he found he was unable to reach the outer sections and his feet swung many feet from the ledge below.

To leap up with an objective in view called for nerve, but to descend so that entire ledge, with a two hundred foot drop at the end of any swing, was impossible. He'd over-balance and fall.

The moment he passed as he hung there, until the next swing caught and he realized that soon

his nervous system would seize itself and he'd plunge.

But there was coming to him from inside the clock tower, his life came down below the normal confusion of the clock suddenly suggested that something was wrong. He waited for Big Ben to strike—and Big Ben didn't strike. The old man watched at a lighted lantern lamp that hung from a nail in the wall and, with lightning speed, started to climb the circular stone stairs that wound their way up the tower.

With the lamp held before him he climbed rapidly. He reached the machinery room behind the great clock face and found it deserted. He was turning to go below to telephone when he thought he heard a knock. He stepped, apprehensively. It came again—a knock on the face of the glass. With trembling hand the old man lifted the hub of the small door in the face and slowly opened it. He thrust the lamp outside—and saw a blue mist that swirled about his legs and to side. And yet high up in that mist a pair of eyes.

The lamp dropped from the old man's nervous fingers and crashed to the floor and died. The blue mist vanished, but the eyes remained. And, as the invisible man swung himself through the open door to safety, the old man turned and ran as seldom before. Swept for a moment on the back of the stairs, and—then, as light, sprang. Made satisfied face and in a desperate effort to save him—the keeper of the clock went over and down. He saw his old turn over and over very slowly until it plunged into the black maw of the tower and thudded on the outer steps below.

For a moment the invisible man stood motionless, trying to clear his mind of that vivid picture of the tragedy. Then he hastened down the stairs, pained for a moment beside the Watch body, and hurried out into the street.

With his hand screening his eyes he dashed the gathering crowd and hurried down the Embankment. The thought of the old man that had given to his death still rankled. He had saved Pettibell and not the keeper of the clock in his death. Perhaps, if he had never invented the clock—

An abrupt splash in the dark water below him brought him with a leap to the stone balustrade. Twenty feet below he saw a man struggling in the water, being borne away in the force of current. For a moment a pair of eyes looked above the river and then they swept out and down in a grateful dive.

Eyes Without Men hit the water cleanly; plunged deep in the muddy water and came to the surface breathless. A few yards away from him he saw an upturned iron sink. He swam over it with swift strokes and drew down. Groped about in the sinking blackness until his fingers gripped sudden cloth. Tense to the surface again with the man struggling in his arms. He dashed him twice, ruthlessly, until the man was semi-conscious. Then, letting the tide take him, he drifted down stream to where some stone steps entered the water.

He dragged the man up on to the steps and realized that swimming was happening to him as he glanced the unconscious in the other's eyes.

Eyes Without Men looked down at himself and realized that the river water was acting on gas chemicals in his blood. As he recovered his legs he rose then gradually took shore, landed at Vin street and ran then jumping out of the blackness. With an ungalvanic movement he ripped the cord from his head, shook the sudden shock from his body and dropped it quickly into a overflowing water. He watched it sink away, sinking gradually.

He breathed the damp air and told me I ain't seeing things, neither."

Henry Austin smiled over so slightly. "Come and have a cup of hot coffee, then I've got to get back to my lodgings. My camera's there for a perfect subject, you know."



The old man saw those gleaming eyes for one terrible moment—then he turned and ran, screaming his horror.

Voice From The Void

A dull murmur of sound, a growing, roaring Babble
—but above it all a Voice, a mighty VOICE of
Thunder that spoke From NOWHERE

★ THE VOICE SPEAKS

It was night. The Karfuroodians that deferring, knelt themselves which in the heart of Berlin's West End, was said with light, clamorous with traffic, singing with people.

In a room high up in a modern skyscraper building on the Karfuroodians, five men sat round an oval table of pale wood, glitteringly polished beneath the radiance of lights.

At the head of the table was Bruggemann. Every political paper in every country has made legends throughout the world his great foe with its wide spread of shankers, his pale and unshaven face, his shaven head and the redness, puffed-out cheeks he always wore.

His white and soft right hand lay on a cushion with a golden point as he leaned back and watched his companions—Gerald, come from Paris by air; Leggett, living in Richmond with great success of a topical agent in England; van Steyne, who claimed that he had lived in New York when it was called New Amsterdam; and, lastly, the Englishman who called himself John Mr. Smith.

Bruggemann's pale eyes, as black as the tips of high mountains in winter sunsets, traveled across their faces. Here, he knew, was Power... the power of wealth and capable, power to make or war the laws of men of thousands of workaday folk, power to change the destinies of nations.

Well... he asked gently. Mr. Smith you and I have in pretend to be the typical Englishman of the Court, neural stage and costume, and, indeed, he fitted the part with his fair hair and fair mustache and his young man's voice which had a tone as ringing as the bells of a bazaar.

"I think," he said, "that if King Richard were—oh—that, say?"

He glanced at them all. Gerald broke in. "I cannot participate the Krutian loan for more than four per cent. We must wait."

And while we wait, all this war talk has effect and nations decide to treat the gods of peace," said Bruggemann slowly. "No, Gerald. It must be war, and Mr. Smith is right. Assassinate Karl and half Europe will flow up like a bonfire."

Leggett's quick speech set across Bruggemann's argument. Van Steyne's mouth closed made itself hoarse, and the talk went on.

It was talk of war—and death—and no talk—and destruction; that nations already embroiled with gold might have more gold piled upon them, that those few men might speak themselves still further while crises plunged to disaster as flame and smoke.

Bruggemann checked the talk. His was the final decision, his the power to say yes or no.

And the short silence that followed his important tap on the table top he spoke deliberately.

It would be like this. They sat and looked at each other. It was a tremendous decision, and even they were conscious of it. In silence they stared; and as they stared that silence was broken.

For the first time since heard the Voice from the Void.

It broke suddenly on to the room, a crashing and crashing roll of sound, coming from nowhere, drifting away to nowhere in eddying whorls.

Bruggemann remembered that those who take up the sword shall die by the sword. You have time to alter your decision before it is too late.

All eyes Bruggemann's, the inexorably, were on their feet, their faces blanched, their eyes wide with wonder and apprehension.

"What was that?" gasped Mr. Smith.

Gerald was rushing to the door, turning back his catching look, pulling down the heavy bolt so that he might wear into the passage beyond. At the far end of the passage, out of hearing, banging against the wall, were the three desperadoes Bruggemann had persuaded for the guarding of this secret conference.

Gerald called to them. Nobody had passed. They replied called for an argument. It was true enough.

Something like panic was on them all now. Bruggemann, they observed the walls, the floor and the furniture for hidden weapons, phones, and they found nothing. There was nothing to find.

But, cried Leggett, "what does it mean?"

The Voice answered him instantly. "I assume that I know, I know. You will understand that, all of you. You fear of death. Beware that death does not talk of you. You talk of assassinations. Beware that you yourselves do not get an assassin. You talk of making war. Beware that war is not made on you."

Bruggemann stood up, his six feet two inches of bone and muscle towering above the polished table and the men about it.

"Gentlemen," he said slowly, "this is for the time being impossible. It seems that we have a secret adversary. I wish him pay in his efforts. Meanwhile, this meeting is adjourned until we see—what we shall see."

He stopped, and with the golden pencil he wrote words of fate on the top sheet of the writing pad before him. Those words were—

He held the paper up. They read the words and they nodded. That Bruggemann heard the paper and nodded as cracked rocks on his hands—though he cracked out the life of a lamp.

And the Voice from the Void was silent.

★ A SELLY ASS GETS A JOB

SOME people, when speaking of Jimmy Dreyfus, always say, "Oh, that sly ass!" and did not consider it unusual to add such words to an already destructive criticism.

A few—a very few—had other opinions. Jimmy's uncle, Lord Broadwater, also had his opinion of his nephew. That opinion fell about mid-way between the two extremes mentioned above. Looked to Lord Broadwater, to Jimmy in the library of his house in Grosvenor Square, to which Jimmy had been summoned.

"You know, James, I'm rather puzzled again now whether my sister was proud of you or not." Lord Broadwater's sister was Jimmy's mother. "But I am absolutely certain that story that my own eyes met on you I am not proud of it with satisfaction."

"—Yes, sir," said Jimmy, rising. His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with all its respect due to a second cousin a gentleman. "Nothing to be said will proud about, I should say. You—how's the foreign family? I mean, how are foreign relationships at the moment?"

Lord Broadwater asked a cold eye at Jimmy, looked uncertain for a moment then grinned.

"Well, have high politics out of this, I've read your letter. There are two things in application, to the way."

"Thank you, sir. I told Billy Stokes he was wrong. He helped me with it. He's a faithful whole for education. Believe me, I can give him a lot of my own paper."

Lord Broadwater nodded. "Did Mr. Stokes also put it into your head that education might owe a deep debt of gratitude if you condescended to you to the British Secret Service?"

Jimmy brightened. "As a matter of fact, no, he did. You see, it was this way. He and I and George Jones were at the Varsity Theatre together. George's sister's playing there. A really top girl, and English, pretty."

"Quite," agreed Lord Broadwater. "Well."

"And Billy said to me: 'What are you going to do for a living, Jimmy?'"

"Really? I was beginning to think you had an interest in the world."

Jimmy went on. "And I said I didn't know, but that I'd like to do something out of the ordinary. Like, say—Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or one of the Big Five at Scotland Yard."

"Did the post of Prime Minister occur to you during the discussion?"

Jimmy smiled. "No—I thought no position was enough in the family."

He eyed Lord Broadwater steadily and got ready to bolt.

My Lord, however, laughed. "I see. And you ultimately decided to become a Secret Service man, eh? Very interesting. And I am to give you the job, I suppose from your letter. What is your friend Stokes to the way?"

"He's an advertising agent, sir."

Lord Broadwater picked up a letter and glanced at it, his head bent so that Jimmy could not see the amusement in his eyes.

"I gathered he was something like that. Nobody else could have composed a letter beginning, 'Dear Uncle—You and I mean the respectability. Opportunity will come up in a lifetime and this is yours.' It appears to regard you as a bargain. I don't."

The letter returned to the desk top. "But, sir," Jimmy smiled deprecatingly. "I'll have a go. I will, really. I mean, I don't pretend to be anything, I mean, but when I was at Cambridge I did a hundred or more, and I got through the middle eight, and I had a blue for soccer, and..."

"Hm," Lord Broadwater looked over a watchful, shrewd and elegant young man with a pleasant, though slightly young, face and cold and repeating blue eyes, fair hair brushed back, neat and tidy. "You're a big fellow."

"Look here," said his lordship suddenly. "I'm going to talk to you in confidence. You're to keep this right under your hat."

thoughts and tangled up with it at last came to the Fighting Frigate.

It was a very old man, half built of twisted timber, limped, and drooped looking, with bulging windows fitted with bottle glass and a high rounded gable. A very picturesque place with its low windows, gleaming like a red eye through the misty curtains.

It stood right outside, and beside it a deep ditch wound into the earth. Jimmy wondered what tales of struggling and recovery it could have told.

He approached it carefully. The wind was coming slightly from the steady, and the dark sea was breaking steadily under the night's darkness, about two for the money and a half of wild things.

Jimmy looked about him. Near by a short and slender pole carried a length of wire away from the tank. He glanced up at this pole, produced a powerful handle of the kind the army uses, and then slid down again. He was just in time.

A few minutes later the man who had been released from the station, tried to get through to the Fighting Frigate and was told that the connection was broken. He rushed out to him a car.

Jimmy, meanwhile, crept to the edge of the ditch, and then he saw something which startled him. A small boat, lying in the shelter of the tall grass was a boat that at one time had been used and seemed his curiosity.

It was about sixty feet long, built on a wooden frame with a steel and glass wheelhouse (cabin) at the stern and a small porch of a boat, was grey in color, sitting snugly at her moorings in the ditch, with some of the water rising into the ditch.

There was something mounted on her forward deck that Jimmy did not instantly recognize—a log and ugly something like a white cylinder as which he had to stare and stare again before, with a little still head at his heart, he realized it was a torpedo tube.

What he saw, however, was a torpedo tube. The boat seemed a ship of this sort. There was a moderate hull for speed, and carrying a deadly weapon of war.

He looked back to the inn. He was quiet and alert and he moved with the ease of a practiced spy. He reached the corner window. The curtain had not been properly drawn and he was able to see into the room.

Two men were gathered there. One of them was a short, fat fellow with a brownish-red face and big, dancing blue eyes. He was a peevish and had a peevish manner's nap curled on the back of his head. One of his companions was a tall, thin man and his dress was a more or less smart one. He was in a velvet jacket. Jimmy guessed that the fat man was the Captain. The fourth man was a lean, brown person clad in a light blue uniform. A soft felt hat lay on the table at his side.

Suddenly something hurried down from the ceiling and hit the fat man in the face. It was a rubber ball.

He glanced out of his chair yelling: "I'll ask that monkey with all kinds, see if I don't! Hey, you grinning monkey, come down here!"

There was a quick automatic shelling. A small monkey wheeled round the picture rail, took a flying leap, and landed on the red faced man's bald head. There, with another flying leap, he was up on the picture rail again.

The mounted man roared with laughter and said: "Astonish look joyful tonight, Ben!"

"I'll Admonish him of it by my stamping him," growled the fat man, and drove him up at the monkey. The monkey caught it and put it on his backside. Jimmy desired he liked that monkey. He was destined to see a great deal more of him.

The fat man was rubbed down and Jimmy was called for. The butler brought them

in and observed: "It waits about two minutes to leave, Ben."

Winkles were looked at. The dining room lights flashed, and Jimmy was brought from his place by a pair of eyes.

★ TORPEDO FOR A KING

JIMMY had a flash in his imagination. He rushed down to the edge and slipped down the big water-bomb. His forward hatch was open, and he dropped over a low wall, with both feet and arms on either side of it. It was dark and it cracked and split. He reached back, and as he groped for a suitable resting place his hand touched something smooth and hard and cold.

He felt next to it. It was like feeling a great steel disk. His foot next and went very close. He knew he was groping around a thing that under his hand lay enough explosive to send the boat and himself sky high.

He heard the thud of his feet close, the clatter of the monkey. Ben's voice reached him.

"Cut off extra. Now that better, Tom?"

His nose aching. There was a quick whirr, the star had begun to flash gently. Five hundred horsepower was working from sleep.

"Cut off ahead," said Ben.

The torch increased. The boat moved to rest slowly. The typed talk of water sounded just Jimmy's landing place. The boat and itself slipped. He was awake.

She was heading straight away towards the white half-moon of the lighter light. The tide was high, and her small draught enabled her to run easily across the Scottish Firth without any danger whatever. For larger ships than she could make the directed passage in safety under three conditions.

One, having got her outside, obviously looking for a passage out of the water, for Jimmy heard him stepping on the deck and talking to the man in the raincoat.

"He didn't do for another hour, anything and not even then, perhaps, for the wind isn't been right for him and he'd have to talk to the Foreman after leaving Dover. Of course, he said in a friendly way. But I understood he never will unless he can't help it. But now, they say. And this is a trap, isn't it? If I was a king I'd buy the Aqueduct and live in it. None of your waterworks for me."

Jimmy's heart missed a beat. A long... and then, again, a long... and his memories of the moment in his memory of the arrival of Michael of Karate.

But it was ridiculous. Here, if it was true, was a man and his hand placed on the high sea. They also said that at half speed through the deeper water of the strait beyond the Nepe was a better—if it was true.

The other men were answering Ben. "Is the head fitted to that torpedo?"

"No. I'm going to fit it now. It's down there. He didn't think it was in it. It'll be ready. After all, you're here. He's dead without his head, and we won't sitting around for days to try of a powder magazine, believe me."

"I suppose not. By the way, is that fellow of yours O.K. for the job? I don't understand together a lot myself. Do you?"

"No. But Tom does. He was a torpedo instructor in the Navy before that fellow was out for training, and he'll let that fellow understand as sure as we're about this talk. We'd better have him fit the head." He roared: "Tom! Hey, Tom!"

As he goes the man the monkey orders something dropped down beside Jimmy and began to chatter and fumble about. It was Admonish the monkey.

Though the captain's choice Jimmy heard Ben say: "... and he's coming through the Palace's Channel. He's got to the way of that. He'll keep up as far as the Tangle light and then turn and have the wind on his starboard quarter and his right in. You can't tell me."

Tom was grinning over the hatch, and Jimmy nodded in the dark and got ready for anything. And as Ben roared a voice the Year from the Void sounded across the water.

If you wish to live till morning about sleep and make good.

It sounded like the whistle of the wind and the noise of the falling air. It sounded like the thud of the great engine, the pushing song of the ship's progress. It came out of the night's dark heart, as though a phantom giant leaped from the water and shaped and spoke to those on the Torpedo.

Ben roared: "Who said that?"

"I—I—Voice. About sleep, if you wish your life."

Tom, at the battery, yelled: "It's a ghost. That's what it is. A ghost."

"Blind, be damned!" roared Ben, "I don't believe in 'em. You get down and fit that torpedo head, and make it snappy. Mind a leg, you frightened half-breed."

Something laughed. Never did human eyes listen to such laughter. Before—rising, snoring, hissing laughter, the air of a demon. The man in the raincoat said: "That's it, monkey. I see it."

Sam shouted desperately: "Are you going to hang over that battery all night, Tom? Get down, I tell you, or I'll knock you down."

The laughter went on. Tom dropped like a rat into the darkness of the forward cabin, and groped with trembling hand for the light switch, while the great laughter rolled across the dark water.

And Jimmy, straightening himself, shog a violent shiver of light over his face, as an ink above the point of his skin. It was a bone-cracking pain, and Tom, without any sound at all, dropped limply across the bleated body of the great torpedo.

The laughter ceased. In comparative silence the ship drove on.

It seemed that she was moving very slowly, as though the world had been left lighter, had approached that warning, and found.

Sam said in a changed tone: "That was a funny do. What would you make of it?"

"Heaven knows."

The reply of the mounted man was short. Silence followed it. Nobody wanted to speak. The ship drove on.

Fortunately neither of them thought of looking down the forward hatch.

The Voice boomed again: "You have not heard my warning. Your blood is as red as my blood."

"Here," said the mounted man. "This is too much, skipper. This is something I need all understanding. I'm not liking it."

Sam evidently hesitated. Even his laugh heart was tripping nervously. A minute was being made over the water.

"I'll see how Tom's getting on," he said.

He began to move. Jimmy got ready for anything that might be coming to him. Ben was at the top of the hatch, when the microphone a two-foot wire stretched through the darkness, coming in gaily darkness from an unseen window of the wheelhouse.

"The Phantom Ship? Look! Look! The Phantom Ship! It's true! It's the Phantom Ship!"

The Torpedo's light went dark over and the spot like a top as she heeled in starboard, till deep in the living cream-loaded darkness.

What is the mysterious Underwater the Void? What is the Phantom Ship, and what strange animal is the "Yahody" sound? Jimmy plans an inquiry. He'll be back with the next from Berlin (with love) and under admirers. Read next week's gripping installment.

The SOUNDLESS HOUR

Men spoke, but no sounds came! An explosion shattered a house, but it was not heard. Terror stalked in the silence of the Soundless Hour

★ MURDER BELOW

LIVING flat on the bare boards of the room, two men listened nervously for sounds of activity below.

"I suppose back all right," said one. "It's haven't heard the slightest sound for over an hour. I wonder if it's been successful?"

"We'll hear soon enough," answered the other. "I wouldn't mind hitting the old man's head over the door."

The two men passed their eyes close to the boards and from the room below they heard a deep, formless, muffled sound.

"Is that the Professor? Time to through to Mr. Managham?"

The listening men were tense with excitement. They heard the man below speaking into the phone again.

"That you, Joe?" The voice was charged with suppressed excitement. "I promised that you should be the first to hear of my new discovery. I have just passed through a successful demonstration. If you'll come round right away I'll give you particulars. I can't explain what it is on the telephone. What's that? You want me to hold on for a minute. Very well."

The listeners were looked at each other.

"There you, we'll get below," said one of them. "If the Professor gets down as it there won't be a chance. It's now or never!"

The two men left their office and descended the stairs till they stood outside the door of the room in which the man was telephoning.

"What is that?" They heard his voice.

"You're coming round at once! Good, my discovery." Well, perhaps I say as well tell you now what it is. . . . I will demonstrate to you so that you can repeat that my claims are sound. . . . Well, what I have discovered is—

At that moment the two men from the office above, standing in their hands, sprang into the room. The old, white-haired scientist turned round to see them.

"The man who was telephoning below," said the intruder.

The two men were looking at each other.

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The two newspaper men went forward in horrified alarm. The scientist was lying on the floor of the bench, the phone still clutched in his hands.

reading matter, a grin on his hunched face, dropped the corner of his automatic and deliberately shot. The old man slumped to the floor still grasping the phone in his hands.

Joe Managham and Ted Wrayburn, appearing on the London newspaper, the Tribune, dashed from the newspaper office into the waiting car and hurried early to Holton Garden.

They ran up the steps of the old brick house, now let out into offices, and entered into the porter at the passage.

"What's happened?" gasped out Joe Managham. "Joe the police here?" Is he all right?

"Easy on!" greeted the man. "What's your talk about?"

"Why, Professor Handwood! I am talking to him on the phone when he called for help—and he was being attacked—and then nothing more was heard."

"What's his name?" asked the man.

"We'll better go on."

They went up to the third floor, and Managham and Wrayburn dashed into the room, the door of which had been left wide open.

A sweet, sickly smell pervaded the atmosphere.

All the fell back in alarm. Stretched out as the floor of the last of the bench on which his complicated apparatus was mounted lay the body of English Handwood.

Shocked to silence, the three men stood at the man's head.

Then their eyes moved round the room and finally settled on the complicated piece of apparatus on the bench—the lever, ivory, pressure pulleys, spindled pipe, thermometer and gauge.

A little whiff of vapor moved from the post-trunk and of the apparatus.

Young Wrayburn's eyes had their startled brightness and looked again. He started forward, his fingers, and with a dramatic gesture towards the murdered scientist mouthed a number of words. The other two swung round to suppose Joe Managham mouthed some words to alarm. But suddenly he ceased silent from his lips.

The police, seated out of his sight, turned their eyes from the room; but his foot-
step made no sound.

His lips were sealed in a sheet of cold silence as he ran, but no words came.

His hands were dead about the telephone wires. But no he dashed forward, his feet began to stomp, as fast, dully, then sharper, and louder.

Finally he tripped and fell, sprawling on the last flight of stairs. His hands, still holding and clutched like a trigger as he descended. Then it was to witness at the entrance door he was following Managham.

"Help! Help! The murder! The murder! In the house—everyone a-struck! And a double murder! Murder!"

★ NEW METHODS IN CRIME

WITHIN sixty seconds people were working on the staircase, those behind pushing and those ahead falling back in terror, apparently, they were struck dead and dumb.

For an hour this state of alarm existed. Then the silence ceased, and two men in white uniforms to rush into. Footfalls and voices could be heard once more.

The police investigations were continuing while Joe Managham and Ted Wrayburn were feverishly writing up their story for the evening edition of the Tribune.

Before many hours had passed Scotland Yard and the Tribune itself had a staff of specialists working in the murdered scientist's laboratory. But, by as they would, they could not make sense out of his apparatus. They intensely endeavored to give a clue.

But Managham and Wrayburn, friends of the late scientist, and privileged men in respect, did likewise searching.

Back in their office, Managham discussed the case with Wrayburn.

"The police thought that that old Doctor Abner in Handwood's book was a genius in their investigations. Ted," he said.

"But that says we turned up strange signs of having been referred to pretty often. You'll remember the heading: 'Soundless Area in the World to the Scientists!'"

"I signed the article. They'll be startled."

(To be continued in page 20)

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